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Truman's Blunder

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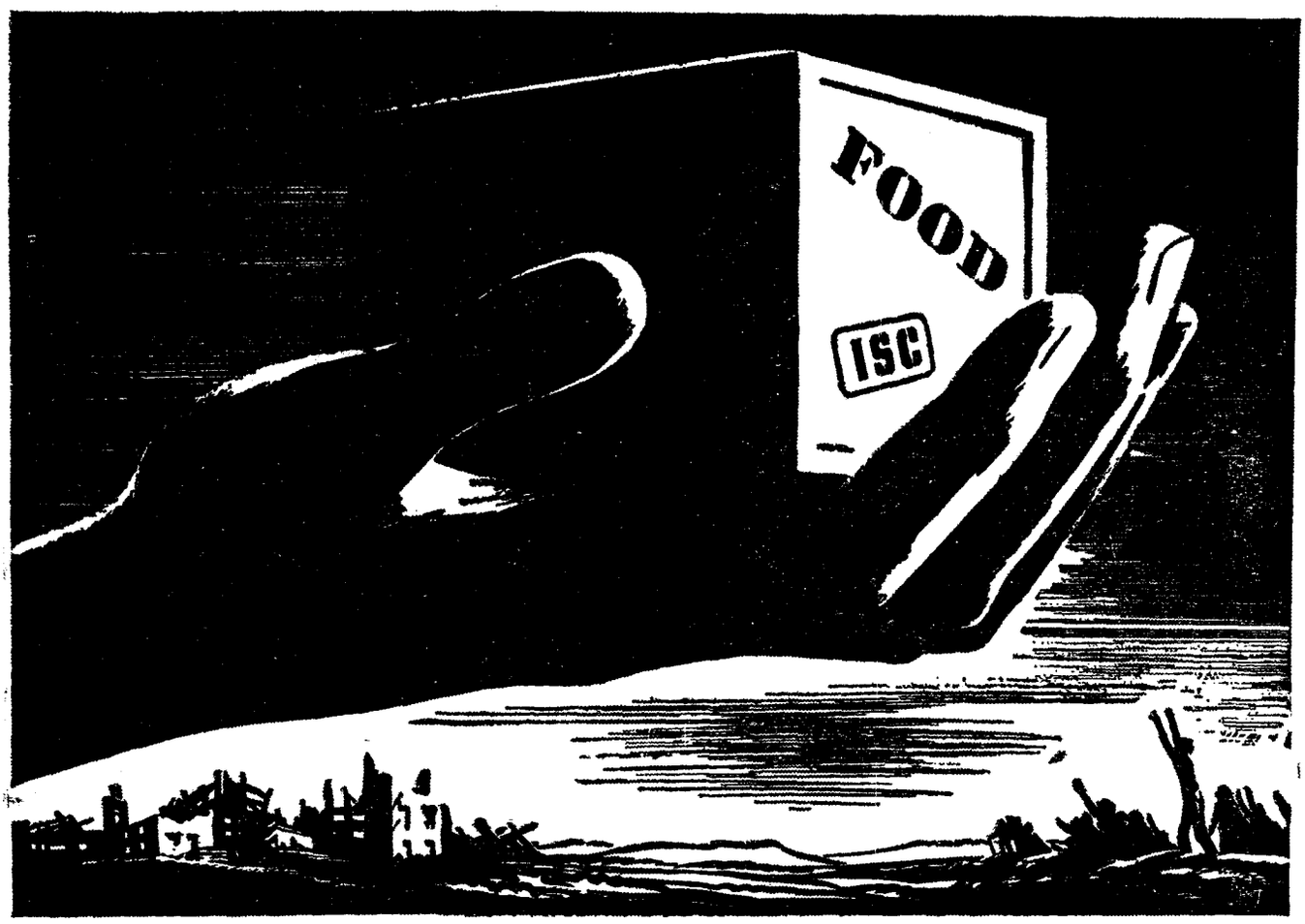

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. 114, NO. 22 NEW YORK, MONDAY, JUNE 3, 1946 NUMBER 1644

Truman's Blunder

THE RAILROAD strike was a national disaster. It was imperative that it be ended; indeed, it was equally imperative that it should never have been allowed to take place. But President Truman's method of ending it is one that deserves only the utmost condemnation. His bill, which passed the House the same day it was introduced and is pending before the Senate as we go to press, would take the United States a terrifyingly long step on the road to fascism. The labor injunction would come back, after all the long years it took to get it abolished. Strikers might be inducted into the army, a proposal which, so far as we know, has never been seriously brought forth before in peacetime in any democratic country. Mr. Truman asks these things only temporarily; but everyone knows that such "temporary" legislation tends to become permanent; and there is no way of knowing whether Congress agrees with him about the temporary character of the legislation even now.

For the record, the President was disingenuous in his account of the attitude of the leaders of the railway strikers. They offered to go back to work on a basis of 18.5 cents per hour plus those changes in the working conditions that had already been approved by the fact-finding board, and arbitration on the additional changes. This was the offer Mr. Truman himself had made. The strikers accepted it. The railroads rejected it. At that point, obviously, the President should have made a speech excoriating the railroads and demanding that they yield. Instead, he suddenly cracked down on the workers and demanded the most vicious piece of anti-union legislation ever introduced by an American President. Why this extraordinary change on his part? We think the answer is clear. We think the President listened to anti-union advisers who urged him to break the power of organized labor while the public and Congress were still raging over the hardships of the strike. We believe not only labor and the public but Congress itself will live to rue the day the President took such bad advice.

It is of course true that the country cannot tolerate strikes in essential industries such as coal, railroads and other vitally needed services. But the answer is not, and must not be, forced labor, at the point of the bayonet. The answer is to give the workers in these industries wages and conditions that they themselves will consider fair and reasonable. In the framework of a decent society, with adequate safeguards for security, labor can be trusted not to make unreasonable demands. It is even now far more to be trusted than the little handful of railroad managers who let Mr. Truman be their stalking horse in resisting just demands. Mr. Truman and Congress have been doing singularly little to make the United States the kind of country where the workers can feel they will be protected in their elementary rights without the use of their sole power weapon: the strike.

If the private owners of the railroads, the coal mines and other vital industries are unable to maintain relations with their workers which avoid the risk of a strike, it is inevitable that many people should turn to government ownership and operation as the answer. Private ownership often says it cannot afford to create and maintain decent wages and working conditions, because profits will not permit it. The answer should be that maintenance of these industries is paramount, is far more important to the country than that they should at all times show a profit on their operations. Government ownership and operation is no magic cure-all. Accompanied by the refusal to permit strikes as a last resort, it, also, can become fascism. But clearly the country must and will consider this solution—properly safeguarded—if the alternative is the sort of thing through which we have been, and are, going.

While, on balance, the railroad men had a better case than the President, Congress or public opinion are at present willing to admit, it is also true that they have obligations which they have not fully recognized. When Mr. Whitney says the railroad men will seek Truman's defeat in 1948, he is venting an irresponsible burst of anger which he may have occasion to regret. If the choice in 1948 is between Truman and a Republican candidate like Bricker, the railroad men would do better to help retain the Democrats in power. If Mr. Whitney was thinking of a third party, he ought to know that at present no third-party candidate can hope

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to win and that any such movement now would guarantee a Republican victory.

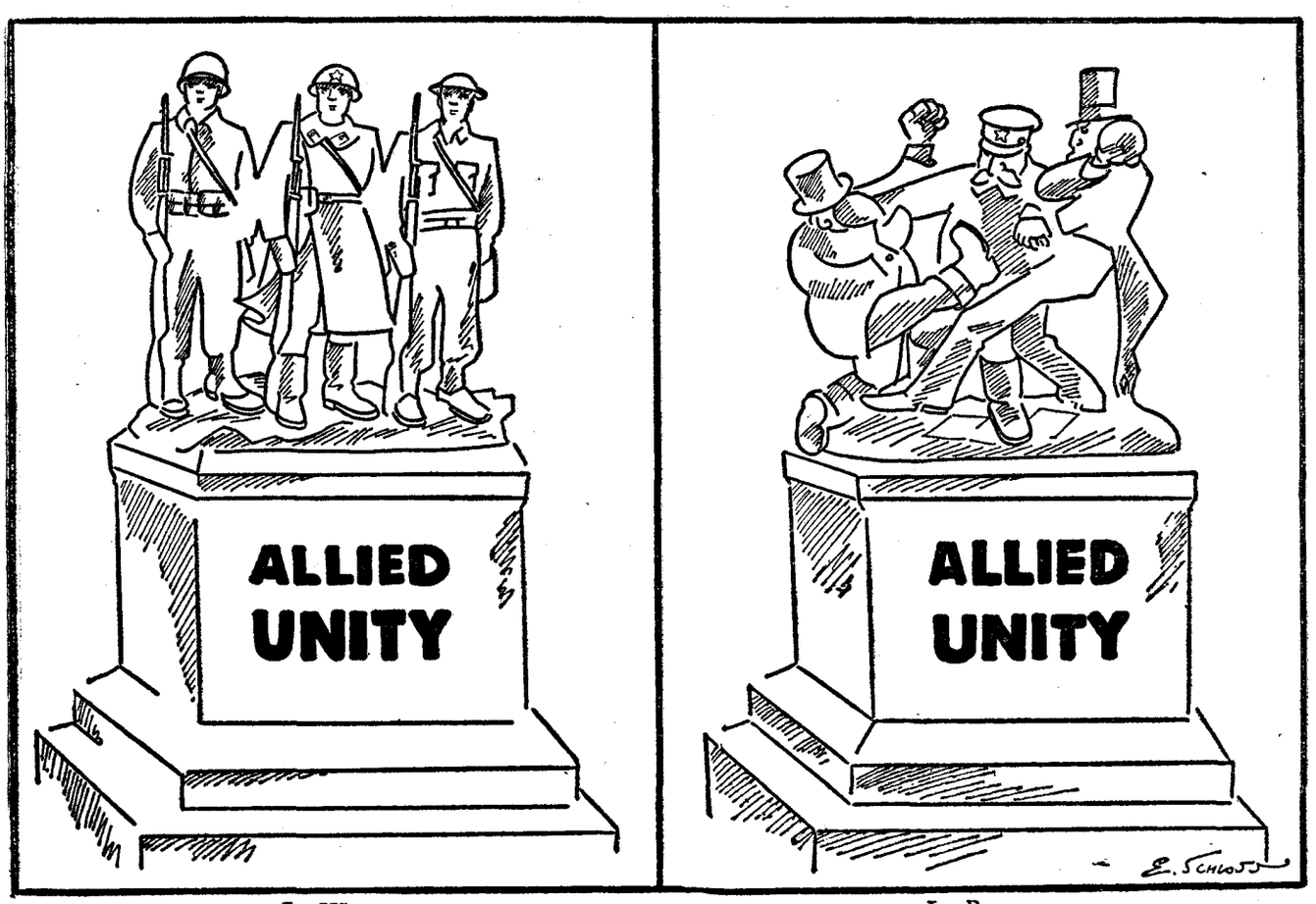
Neither the railroad men nor the coal miners can avoid the fact that the railroad strike, even in 48 hours, probably cost the lives of some thousands of people in the famine-ridden areas abroad; that the coal strike if continued will have the same result; that the two strikes together have already caused a shutdown of Italy's industries, and might result in an overthrow of the present Italian progressive government. If the maritime strike takes place, many more thousands will surely die. In calling these things to the attention of the railroad, coal and marine workers, we are not putting exclusive responsibility on them. Yet there is a tragic lack of any responsibility in the American labor movement, any sense of its responsibilities to the world, at this time. When industrial strife means further chaos in a stricken world, we have an international as well as a national responsibility not to let disputes break down into open industrial warfare.

Paris Post-Mortem

IN TWENTY-TWO DAYS at Paris the Western democracies and the Soviet Union failed to find a means of living in one world with each other. Secretary Byrnes now seems willing to risk wrecking the total United Nations structure on the same rock of discord that shattered the unity of the four great powers.

The Byrnes threat to remove the task of recommending treaties from the great-power council and deposit it in the World Assembly of the UN is somewhat less than dubious. It has the earmarks of desperation. There can be no world peace if the foreign ministers of the great powers cannot find material for agreement among themselves in their own council. On Byrnes's own testimony that peace is indivisible, a new failure to agree when the ministers of the United States, Great Britain, Russia and France reconvene on June 15, would be catastrophic. But, in the event of such failure, it would be to compound catastrophe to transfer the conflict to the arena of the World Assembly.

If the present erection of power blocs is to continue with Russia expanding in Asia, in the Middle East and in the Mediterranean, and with the United States considering plans to create an armed hemisphere in the Americas, the last faint hope of the world—and faint indeed—will reside in the United Nations. Why then risk smashing the UN by asking its assembly to approach an assignment for which it was never designed? The UN was created to maintain the peace which the great powers promised to win and then propose to the entire world. Its designers never dreamed of its attempting, in a World Assembly, to draft peace treaties which Byrnes has been unable even to outline at Paris.



In War In Peace

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The Secretary's account of his arduous labors at Paris must not be permitted to obscure the fact that the conference failed. That bitter reality must also be kept uppermost in appraising the corollary reports of Senators Vandenberg and Connally and the Vandenberg proclamation that a "positive, constructive, peace-seeking, bipartisan foreign policy for the United States" has been evolved from the Paris failure.

The people of the United States want and seek a bipartisan policy capable of achieving peace. Thus far the policy heralded by Vandenberg has proved itself capable only of unifying the Republican Senator from Michigan and the Democratic Senator from Texas. Moreover, had Vandenberg in his isolationist days, and in the course of his international reformation, been less fierce in his denunciations of the Soviet Union, his espousal of a policy which has led to absolute stalemate might be less depressing. His demand for a "unified Germany" might be viewed with less suspicion—perhaps even as an attempt to adjust the economic balance of Europe instead of an enthusiastic first step toward establishing a cordon around the western doorstep of the USSR.

Unless some miracle of statesmanship is passed at the renewal of the great-power conference on June 15, it may well develop that Senator Vandenberg has established "bipartisan unity" on foreign policy just too late for peace, but just in time for a new world conflict. But the reports of Vandenberg, of Connally and, above all, of Byrnes, served a useful purpose because they placed in perspective the increasingly obvious fact that in the present state of relations between the United States and Russia, peace may, after all, be impossible. If the men and women of America and Russia who will have to do the fighting and the suffering in a third world war ever see that prospect clearly, the two supreme powers may finally do something about the hatred, suspicion and mistrust which are leading the world toward disaster.

This hatred and suspicion were not reported by Byrnes; he reported merely on the fruits of hatred and suspicion, detailing Russia's intransigence, her refusal to move toward the main issues, depicting a diplomatic sit-down strike. In behalf of the Secretary of State, it must be conceded he made a good case with his arguments on the problems of Trieste, of Italy, of the Italian colonies, of Austria, of the dire urgency of terminating occupation in Europe. But no doubt Molotov, on returning to Russia, made a very effective case in his private report to Premier Stalin on how he blocked Anglo-American moves against what he considers Russian requirements for security in a world where power is the deity, and every move toward peace must be weighed for its value in preparing for war.

Both Byrnes and Molotov are aware that a settlement is not likely—is probably impossible—in such an atmosphere and that haggling over piecemeal territorial questions serves only to make ultimate agreement even more difficult. And the frigid reception in Paris and London to the Byrnes threat to toss the argument into the Assembly, accompanied by a stony silence in Moscow, make it clear enough that the other three great powers are putting no trust in the United States proposal to flee the discord of a four-power impasse in the discord of the 51 nations who compose the World Assembly.

The way to resolve a stalemate is to strike at its source. As long as the two principal powers—Russia and the United States—initiate every move and plan every maneuver out of a backlog of mistrust and mutual fear, negotiations can continue *ad infinitum* without result. If there is to be the slightest hope of puting off a new conflict, a major reorientation of Soviet and Anglo-American policies is necessary in order that the hatred and suspicion poisoning the relations of the East and the West may be resolved.

Full Employment Stalled

As a result of President Truman's three-month delay in appointing the members of his Council of Economic Advisers, the planning machinery set up by the Employment Act of 1946, the so-called "full-employment" bill, is completely stalled.

The big job of figuring out how the Council will operate has not even been tackled. The various federal departments and agencies have been given no idea as to what role they are to play in the planning process. In Congress, the creation of the Joint Committee on the Economic Report has been postponed until after the President selects the members of his Council.

The official explanation of the President's delay in making these $15,000-a-year appointments is that Truman cannot get good men to take the jobs. A more likely explanation is that the President has not yet summoned up enough courage to commit himself to the appointment of three liberals and that, instead, he is still toying with the idea of naming one or more men to appease the right wing of the Democratic Party. Until he makes up his mind that all three members of the Council must be men who will fight for full employment, self-respecting liberals are unlikely to serve.

Many progressives on Capitol Hill agree that the most effective man for chairmanship of the Council of Economic Advisers would be Harold Smith, the Director of the Budget. In his favor are his full commitment to the principles of full employment, his unparalleled knowledge of the inner workings of all the innumerable agencies of the government and his unique position and qualifications to solve the problem of integrating the work of the Council of Economic Advisers with that of the Budget Bureau. Ralph Flanders, the Vermont businessman who carried the fight for the full-employment bill within the Committee for Economic Development, and either Robert Nathan or Alvin Hansen have support from the CED.

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Further delay in making liberal appointments will serve to encourage the enemies of full employment, as well as those in the Administration who mistakenly feel that the planning machinery of the Act is not needed until we can see mass unemployment right around the corner.

Putting Railroads Above the Law

The Senate Interstate Commerce Committee has concluded hearings on the Bulwinkle bill, which would exempt the nation's railroads from the anti-trust laws so far as collaboration on rates is concerned. Indications are that the committee will attempt to rewrite the bill, to define the areas of permissible coöperation between the roads, and in that field grant immunity from the monopoly laws. The bill should be killed. The only acceptable move short of that, in the protection of the public interest, would be to delay action until the Supreme Court has had a chance to decide two important anti-trust cases now in the process of adjudication.

Although in numbers the proponents of the measure far outweigh those opposing it, the overwhelming evidence clearly indicates that the "coöperation" the railroads desire is something quite different from the negotiations they contend are necessary to produce an equitable and sensible freight-rate structure. The railroads want to restrain competition. They want to continue a system which gives their top trade organization, the Association of American Railroads, practically complete control over rates and rate-making.

Evidence before Senator Wheeler's committee leaves no doubt that the AAR has exercised coercion in numberless instances to prevent individual railroads, or groups of railroads, from putting into effect lower freight rates and passenger fares which would have benefited shippers, the public—and the war effort. That explains why the AAR is exerting such tremendous pressure to get the Bulwinkle bill through Congress. It must have grave doubts about the ability of the railroads to win the anti-trust cases brought by the Justice Department and the state of Georgia.

The system now employed by the railroads in fixing rates goes far beyond restricting competition between railroads. It strikes at the very heart of the whole American system of competitive enterprise. If the Bulwinkle bill becomes law, it will eliminate competition to a large degree from the whole economy. It is hard to understand why businessmen have not seen this, but they haven't.

As Assistant Attorney General Wendell Berge pointed out, the power to fix freight rates is the power to control a basic competitive factor in every industry. Transportation cost is a major competitive element in all industries—and sometimes a controlling one. That is what Governor Ellis Arnall is complaining about.

So long as the present practice of rate discrimination against the South and West continues, just so long are Southern and Western industries going to be at a competitive disadvantage with Northern and Eastern interests. And, as Governor Arnall points out, so long as the heads of big Eastern manufacturing concerns hold controlling positions in the railroads, just so long will that discrimination continue.

There seems to be general agreement that some area of coöperation must be allowed the railroads. That area will be defined by the courts. There is no justification for the Bulwinkle bill, or any revised version of it. In view of Civilian Production Director Small's indefensible action recently in extending exemption of the railroads from anti-trust laws, the Senate committee should not only pigeonhole the bill but should also let the country know that it is definitely not going to act until after the Supreme Court decision.

Housing Spurts and Sputters

From one point of view, housing looks good. Starts are at an all-time peak. In the first quarter of the year more than a fourth of those scheduled were achieved. Most of the housing program was ahead of schedule. Willing buyers appeared to snap up almost anything that private enterprise was willing to offer. The building boom was off to a good start as of May first.

But in one sense it was too good a start. More priorities had been issued than the supply of building materials warranted. In certain sections—notably the South—there were reports of labor shortages. Builders complained about lost time, about half-finished structures hung up for lack of supplies. The authorizations for non-residential structures in the first quarter were so great that it was clear the Civilian Production Administration should sharply curb non-residential building at once. But instead, in the face of materials shortages, the CPA is about to curtail permits for houses!

Veterans are complaining that most of the housing still is far beyond their capacity to pay. Negroes and others look in vain for a program to relieve their problems of congestion and segregation. The Wagner bill, which would begin a long-term housing program, gathers dust in the House of Representatives. Wyatt urges labor unions to speed up their apprentice-training, although a full program of apprentice-training would not mature within four years. There are complaints that quality standards are neglected and that sales at present prices are a fraud upon buyers who may with reasonable confidence expect within five years to find housing of equal quality for half the present charges. The government which guarantees the loans extended upon these inflated values may shortly find itself faced with three alternatives: either to countenance a permanent elevation of the general price level, to enter into large-scale possession of housing which the mortgagors and mortgagees both have determined to forfeit, or to embark on a program of refinancing or selling these

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houses at a considerable loss to the national treasury.

Although the United States has never before seen a building program of the magnitude of that scheduled by Wyatt, it still falls far short. Not only short of our need, but far short of the nation's capacity to build, given adequate use of industrial techniques and sensible restraint of non-essential theatres, store fronts, etc.

OPA: The Last Mile

THE SENATE is using a knife on the Price Control Act, instead of the bludgeon the House employed, but the result promises to be about the same. Barring some sudden change in the senatorial attitude toward the OPA, the Price Control Act will emerge from the Senate badly, if not hopelessly, crippled.

Under the circumstances, crippling can be just as fatal as the House's "off-with-their-heads." The OPA will be up against tremendous, virtually irresistible, pressures in the next six to eight months. Additional price increases will have to be made under present policies. The shortages which create black markets and drive up prices cannot possibly be cured within that time. Besides, the agency must fight a growing refusal to comply, and must hold out without the allocations, rationing and fiscal controls that buttressed price control during the war. To cope with these forces, the OPA needs more strength, not less.

Instead, the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, which is handling the OPA bill, already has approved these major amendments:

Elimination of the OPA's Maximum Average Price plan. The OPA had its troubles with MAP, but with it, was at last succeeding in forcing manufacturers to produce a larger percentage of low-cost clothing. That clothing is just beginning to reach the stores in quantity. Now MAP is to go, for there is practically no chance that the Senate will reverse the committee vote against it, and the House already has knocked it out. With MAP gone, there will be no government power to prevent clothing and wool and rayon manufacturers from producing goods only at the top of the price range. The triumph of the National Retail Dry Goods Association will be complete.

The elimination of MAP will add about $1 billion a year to the country's clothing bill. Months of chaos in the clothing market are also likely. Manufacturers who see higher prices ahead are not likely to do much shipping between now and July 1, when the official end of MAP would come.

As a "compromise," the Banking and Currency Committee voted to cut subsidies only in half. The OPA had asked $1,770 million to continue to hold down food prices. The committee approved about $900 million and ordered subsidies ended on May 1, 1947. Since the House voted only $600 million, and for a January 1, 1947, deadline, any further change before final passage will be downward.

Unlike the House bill, the Senate amendment would permit the OPA to decide what subsidy should be dropped or cut, and at which time. However, assuming that subsidies are only halved, a four or five-per-cent rise in the price of milk, bread, meat and other basic foods could be expected in the next year.

Dearest to the hearts of the Senators operating on the price-control bill is an amendment to put the OPA irrevocably out of business within another year—by June 30, 1947. The Senate committee, however, did not like the technique chosen by the House. At the suggestion of the cotton and farm-bloc Senators, the committee solved the problem by voting to shift the final authority over agricultural prices and the decontrolling of agricultural commodities away from the OPA and Chester Bowles, director of the Office of Economic Stabilization, and into the hands of the Secretary of Agriculture. In the opinion of the farm-cotton spokesmen, Secretary Anderson can be depended upon to do right by their products. Bowles has consistently refused to yield to them.

Final authority to say when price controls shall be dropped on everything else is to be placed in a new three-man board to be appointed by the President. The board would hear appeals from industry-advisory committees whose pleas for decontrol might have been turned down by the OPA, the OES or the Secretary of Agriculture. President Truman made a special appeal to the committee not to take the two proposed decontrol steps, but it had no effect.

Capping all its previous action, the committee has recommended that price control on meat, poultry and dairy products should end on June 30, one month from now. It was decided to leave no doubt about what should be done on these favored products. Although the committee was amply warned that such action would play havoc with the whole price structure, and wreck hopes of obtaining more grain for hungry Europe (the grain would be fed to highly profitable livestock), it was not deterred. The ending of price control on meat, it has been estimated, would raise retail prices four or five cents a pound. Prices of poultry and dairy products also would skyrocket.

The "decontrol" amendment is preceded by a declaration emphasizing that "adequate prices" and the removal of controls are necessary to "stimulate production." The committee ignored, as though it had never heard them, the Federal Reserve Board figures showing that industrial production in March hit its peacetime peak—169. In 1939, the figure was 109.

President Truman, in a letter which was buried by the railroad strike, warned the Senate in advance that he would veto a price-control bill as devastating as that passed by the House. At the present rate, it looks as though he had better have his pen ready.

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Washington Wire

"Putting Labor in Its Place"

IT IS AFTER MIDNIGHT in the Senate chamber: the few members present are nodding. Venerable, frock-coated Senator Hoey (D, N. C.) presides. Young Glen Taylor—"The Singing Cowboy"—(D, Idaho) has the floor. For days past the minority group has fought restrictive labor legislation in the coal crisis. They are trying to save the Wagner Act. It looks like an all-night session. Mr. Taylor clears his voice. He objects to the Byrd amendment requiring joint operation of welfare funds, pleads with drowsy members "not to make jackasses of themselves."

Instantly Senator Hickenlooper (R, Ia.) is on his feet charging Taylor with indecorum. Chairman Hoey, supporter of the Byrd amendment, bangs the gavel like a pistol shot. All in one sentence he shouts down Taylor, cries, "The question is on the Byrd amendment" and commands the clerk to call the roll. "Mr. Aiken," begins the clerk.

Red-faced and indignant, Senator Hatch (D, N. M.) —backer of the Byrd amendment, but indignant at the "sharp practice"—protests. The amendment is adopted by 18 votes. And so the filibuster nears its end.

Over the radio comes the voice of President Truman—a small man, made mighty by a great office. There is no Roosevelt bugle-note in his voice, but one can feel the strained sincerity. Indecisive Mr. Truman has made the great decision. The rail strike must end. No President can see the nation brought to paralysis. Democracy faces its basic paradox: the conflict of two inalienable rights, the right of men not to work; the right of integrated society to protect itself from the effect of this stoppage. Mr. Truman isn't interested in philosophy. The strike must stop. He speaks with finality. To America's greatest all-time radio audience his words carry conviction.

Now it is the big House chamber, just after four on Saturday afternoon. The sun blazes outside. In the air-cooled hall the Representatives still mop their foreheads. In their lapels are red buddy-poppies. In the President's gallery sits Mrs. Truman. The high, flat voice of her husband fills the chamber. Hysterical applause has followed him since last night; now he denounces the "obstinate arrogance of two men," the septuagenarian rail leaders. Spotlights blaze, cameras whir, his Missouri voice covers America.

What he demands is significant. For long-range purposes he proposes merely more fact-finding. The Truman strategy is to give Congress a "cooling-off period," if he can. But for the immediate strikers he is savage. Their action would be made, retroactively, not merely a legal crime but a moral sin. "And authorize the President," he says, "to draft into the armed forces of the United States all workers who are on strike against their government."

The "oh" comes from me, involuntarily. Draft men who strike, in peacetime, into the armed services! Is this Russia or Germany? The audience below roars its approval. If any flinch, the noise does not show it. And even in the applause there is an interruption. A note is placed on Mr. Truman's desk. If this is prearranged drama it is skillfully staged. Mr. Truman looks up. The rail strike is over: settled on the government's terms. People look at each other. Mr. Truman goes on, but the strain has snapped. And then we think of the coal crisis and the maritime workers' threat for June 15 and of all the other men who are demanding higher wages as prices increase.

And so the great scene is set. It has temporarily strengthened Mr. Truman; how far it will weaken labor is to be seen. Two great postwar clashes whose juxtaposition was wholly accidental, precipitated by union leaders whose absence of radical ideology was their most striking feature, have created a landmark for the years to come. It was impossible, really, to justify the tactics of either labor group, and now all organized labor must withstand the storm. Standing in his brown suit above the floor of the Senate, making a desperate effort to defend what he quietly terms "the so-called Wagner Act," Robert F. Wagner (D, N. Y.) is sparser-haired, heavier, older, than when he introduced the great legislation eleven years ago. He is fighting now for its life. This is the opportunity his opponents have been waiting for all these years.

Yet whatever the amendments, or the new bill itself, certain long-term facts stand out. First of all, the sacrosanct Railway Labor Act, which a fortnight ago was held up by editorial writers as the great panacea, has permitted the very strike which it was supposed to prevent. Furthermore, labor's economic position is now the strongest in history. While full employment continues, no great disaster to all labor, like the crushing of the ill timed 1920 steel strike, is possible. Labor's greatest over-all threat today is still depression, not punitive legislation.

Again, like it or not, President Truman's intervention has brought great industries like coal and rails closer to federal control, even while it has done the same thing to their unions. Do these great industries belong to their stockholders? No, says Walter Lippmann; in the last analysis, "they belong to the nation."

And finally the drama shows Congress' own failure. Inflation spawns strikes, and while Congress has rejected social-welfare legislation for labor, it has repealed the excess-profits tax for employers. Congress is bent on putting labor in its place, but it is largely Congress that created the situation that made the emergency inevitable.

One controversy has been started in Washington by the events of the railroad strike that will probably go on for years. Is the President a man of iron nerve? Or does he just fail to recognize a major crisis when he sees one? All the reporters who covered the railroad trouble tell the same story. With deadlocked negotiations going on in the next room, the President saw a series of unimportant callers on unimportant matters. He went off to a two-hour lunch that had nothing to do with the strike. As the zero hour approached for the men to leave their jobs, he strolled out to a garden party for disabled veterans and spent more than an hour chatting on the lawn. Either a man of iron —or one of stone.

Washington T. R. B.

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Political Roundup

War Among the Democrats

THE BROAD SMILES Republican Representatives wore last week were a present from their Democratic colleagues in the House. A little group of willful Southerners had succeeded in calling Democratic Chairman Bob Hannegan to account before them on charges of trying to keep the Democratic Party semi-liberal and the Republicans were gloating over the advantage they thought this at least temporary civil warfare would give them in this year's elections.

The Southerners accused Hannegan of having secret plans to purge some of the worst reactionaries from the party and of collaborating with the CIO and other liberal political-action groups. In a lengthy private session with his accusers, Hannegan flatly denied the first charge, admitted and said "So what?" to the second. Speaker Sam Rayburn had given him a good lunch and advised him to fight back before he went into the meeting. When the Southerners demanded that Hannegan renounce any liberal alliances he has had in the past, the Chairman smiled agreeably and replied firmly that the Democratic Party must remain the progressive party in order to stay in power and that therefore it was his duty to welcome the support of all liberal groups. He went on to defend the participation of his staff in the coming National Citizens' PAC's school of political-action techniques on the same grounds, and explained his support for the FEPC by pointing out that the party platform committed him to it.

The Southerners were not pleased at his answer, but they knew better than to make an issue of it during that meeting. Apparently, the congressmen had been given short lectures by their party leaders back home during Easter vacation, and had been told to quit bucking the party until after elections this year. And so, when the meeting was over, they came out smiling. Even Representative Eugene Cox of Georgia was exuberant. "It went off well, very well," was his opinion.

Experienced politicians who sat in on this meeting judge it a draw. The Southerners failed to break the Democratic-PAC alliance, which was their real objective. But Hannegan also failed to wipe out this basic party conflict. This "liaison committee" of Republocrats expressed themselves as well pleased with the results of the meeting, but they did not vote to disband. They will be on guard against any future move to enforce party discipline on them and will be quick to accuse Hannegan of lying—the cardinal political sin—if he breaks his word not to move against them. To that extent, the showdown was a victory for the Southerners.

Meanwhile, the big three of progressive political action, the CIO-PAC, the NCPAC and the Independent Citizens' Committee, were hard at work on the details of the plan to coördinate their campaign activities more closely this year. The more efficient and more powerful they become, the less likelihood there is that Hannegan and the top party-organization people will be frightened into following the wishes of the Southerners.

The response to national publicity about the school of political-action technique which the NCPAC will conduct in Washington, June 26-29, has brought such a flood of applications to enroll that this pioneer attempt in practical political instruction will almost certainly have to turn away a great number of would-be students. Several Scripps-Howard papers, including the New York *World-Telegram*, threw out Tom Stokes's syndicated column the day he wrote a fair explanation of the political-action school's objectives.

Virginia. – For the first time in 24 years, Virginia is going to have a Democratic primary contest for the Senate seat to be filled this year. Martin A. Hutchinson, Richmond lawyer and New Dealer, has entered the race against Senator Harry Flood Byrd, in order, he says, to give the people of the state a chance to elect someone other than Byrd. Hutchinson was a member of the Committee of One Hundred which opposed Byrd's efforts to take the state delegation away from Roosevelt at the last Democratic national convention. Now that Byrd has named former Governor Colgate Darden, a duPont son-in-law, as his campaign manager, Hutchinson has plenty of basis for the biblical analogy to David and Goliath on which he is basing many of his campaign speeches. The main efforts of the anti-Byrd forces are going into a drive for the largest possible registration, particularly of returned servicemen who know Byrd's bad record on the soldier-vote bill and other matters affecting their welfare.

Utah. – Democratic Senator Abe Murdock and Representatives Walter Granger and J. W. Robinson are virtually assured of reëlection this year. A strong streak of basic liberalism runs all the way through the party in the state. Even the leading candidates for city and county offices are progressives. Senator Murdock is as yet unopposed in the Democratic primary, and the Republicans are still unable to find a strong candidate to enter against him. Even Murdock's former weak spots in the state have been strengthened: in the Provo area, where the shutdown of the Geneva Steel plant brought a depression, Murdock has moved ahead by aiding the efforts of outside companies to get the plants back into production.

Granger is even more popular in the First Congressional District than Murdock was when he held that seat. No strong Republican has been found to make this race, either. In the Second District, Salt Lake, the liberal spirit is so strong that there is much dissatisfaction with Representative Robinson because, even though his record on liberal issues is as good as Granger's or Murdock's, he has allowed himself to be used by Rankin on the Un-American Activities Committee and generally tries to play both sides on the Utah political street while continuing to vote right. There is a good chance that the most progressive wing of the party in the Second District will urge a young liberal to enter the primary against Robinson for "scare" purposes, with the hope of building him up to replace Robinson in a few years. Utah Republicans, led by Reuben Clark, a sort of Harding and Hoover combine, remain hopelessly bankrupt of talent.

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What Russia Wants

by Irving Brant

SINCE 1776, the United States has had the most consistent and successful policy of territorial expansion of any country in the world—a highly moral policy, as we look back on it, except where it touched the rights of non-white or non-Christian peoples, with gradual improvement as to them. At present we are seeking military bases across half the world. It is well to keep this in mind, lest we overmoralize on Soviet Russian territorial expansion by a thumbs-down reaction to anything to which that label can be affixed, without asking what it is or why it is. Let us start by listing the possible reasons for Soviet claims to additional territory:

1. To control and communize as much of the world as possible.
2. To acquire new economic resources.
3. To gain new trade outlets.
4. To strengthen the country's defenses.
5. To regain territories previously lost.
6. To round out the Soviet "multi-national state" by bringing in outlying groups of the same nationalities as the Soviet peoples.

The first of these six motives would be aggressive and dangerous. The second, third and fourth, without other justification, would be aggressive and might or might not be dangerous. The fifth, judged by current standards, would be neither dangerous nor aggressive. The sixth might be aggressive but would not be dangerous.

If Russia has any thought of world conquest or forcible communization, there will be no evidence of it in territorial expansion until that has been carried beyond the point to which it might extend for other reasons. This motive, therefore, should be disregarded in the detailed examination of Soviet territorial policy and considered later in relation to its sum total. Let us see how Russia's achieved or desired annexations of territory fit into the motives listed above:

Finland. – Motives 4 and 6. The Karelian Isthmus and two small adjacent islands were annexed, and the Hangoe region leased, for national defense. North of Lake Ladoga, territory was taken to round out the Karelian Soviet Republic. The smallness of the total annexation, from a country formerly in the Russian empire, rules out Motive 5.

Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. – Motives 3, 4 and 5. These Baltic countries, a part of Russia up to 1918, were retaken in 1939 primarily for defense against Germany. They are desired now for strategic reasons, but also to give Russia the ice-free Lithuanian port of Memel and partly ice-free Libau and Riga.

East Prussia. – Motive 3. Poland gets most of this German province. Russia pushes beyond czarist boundaries and the Niemen River defense line in order to get the year-round port of Königsberg.

Poland. – Motives 4, 5 and 6. The territories east of the Bug River, annexed by Russia, were seized by Poland from the Soviets in 1920. Their population is chiefly Ukrainian and White Russian. The Soviet Union thus rounds out two Soviet nationalities, establishes a strong defense line and reclaims part of the czarist empire, but does not utilize this last principle for any claim upon the Polish-inhabited parts of Poland.

The Carpatho-Ukraine. – Motives 4 and 6. This little block of land, wedged in between Hungary and Poland, was seized by Hungary from Czechoslovakia in 1940. Hitler used it as a base of propaganda designed to detach the Russian Ukraine from the Soviet Union. Stalin was reported in 1943 to have promised its return to Czechoslovakia. The later Soviet request for a plebiscite on this point indicates a belief that the people will vote to join their Soviet Ukrainian brethren. The basic purpose is to give Russia a common frontier with Hungary as well as Czechoslovakia, thus heightening Soviet influence there and making contact easier with Yugoslavia.

Northern Bukovina. – Motives 4 and 6. This Rumanian province, occupied by Russia in 1940 and again after the Nazi retreat, is inhabited by Ukrainians. Together with the Carpatho-Ukraine, it completes the rounding out of the Ukrainian Soviet republic, and furnishes a solid defensive bastion in the Carpathian mountains for Russia's new western frontier.

Bessarabia. – Motives 5 and 6. Rumania seized Russian-populated Bessarabia from the Soviets after World War I. Russia has taken it back because, as one Soviet editor explained to the indignant portion of the American press, to ask if Bessarabia is part of Russia is like asking if California is part of the United States.

Dardanelles and Dodecanese Bases. – Motives 3 and 4. Here is the historic Russian desire to free the country's southern commerce and naval forces from the danger of being bottled up in the Turkish straits, and to make it impossible for a hostile fleet to enter the Black Sea. Possession of these bases would also make

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Irving Brant is a well known newspaperman and authority on national and international politics. His recent books include James Madison: The Virginia Revolutionist, Road to Peace and Freedom *and* The New Poland, *published this spring by the International Universities Press. He spent the fall of 1945 in Poland.*

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Russia a Mediterranean power in terms of pre-atomic weapons.

Turkish Armenia. – Motives 4 and 6. Adjoining the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, this territory was denied to the Soviet Union at the time President Wilson turned down an American mandate over it. The denial, due entirely to hostility toward the new Soviet Union, causes Soviet Armenians to look on it as lost territory, though it never was a part of Russia. The Soviets desire it now in order to push the national frontier away from the vital and vulnerable oilfields of the Caucasus.

Iran. – Motives 2, 4 and 6. The northern Iranian province of Azerbaijan lies across the Soviet border from the Azerbaijanian SSR. The Azerbaijanians of Iran are not Iranians. They overlap racially with the Soviet Azerbaijanians, although, as the latter speak fifteen languages, the relationship is a trifle complex. Oil, however, is what the Russians want in Iranian Azerbaijan; also a frontier farther from their great oil center of Baku, capital of Soviet Azerbaijan.

Manchuria. – Motives 2, 3 and 4. Russia's new lease on Port Arthur, like the one obtained by the empire of the czars, is designed to furnish an ice-free port on the Pacific. Its establishment implies some measure of control of transportation across Manchuria and a Russian share in the development of Manchurian industry.

Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands. – Motives 4 and 5. Russia takes back the half of Sakhalin grabbed by Japan in 1905 and with it a string of little islands which dot the entrance to the Sea of Okhotsk—important only to Russian naval and air defense, and freely conceded by Russia's allies.

Here then is an impressive list of twelve territorial-expansion projects involving nine nations now independent—Finland, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Turkey, Iran, China and Japan—together with the briefly independent ex-Russian provinces of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. What does it add up to?

THE FIRST striking fact is that (classing Turkey as Asiatic) all of the aims in Europe have been won or agreed to, and they look much less formidable now than when they were merely in prospect. Finland was treated with pleasing leniency. The lands taken from Poland, east of the Curzon Line, are recognized now for what they are—Ukrainian and White Russian territories. Every Russian territorial move for national defense in Europe has been fortified either by the reclamation of lost territory, the unifying of Soviet nationalities or the enemy status of the other party—considerations which may not remove the element of aggression, but distinctly minimize the actions as evidence of an aggressive policy.

Looking at both the European and Asiatic projects, there is a similar predominance of those motives which Americans regard as most justifiable. In the entire twelve listed above, with numerous duplications from multiple motives, ten have the object of national defense, seven are to round out Soviet nationalities, four are to reclaim lost territories, four to gain new trade outlets, two to acquire new economic resources. The six of the last two groups boil down to four when duplications are eliminated. Of these four, all but one (Königsberg) have the collateral aim of national defense, and the largest of them (the Baltic states) involves the return of lost territory.

IN THE Asiatic list, Russian policy toward Iran is treated as one of territorial expansion even though the ostensible purpose is autonomy for Azerbaijan within Iran. Autonomy, plus a fifty-year Soviet oil development, plus the contrast in living conditions between Soviet and Iranian Azerbaijan, would add up to ultimate union of the two territories. Some months ago, in Europe, I made a remark to an American official about the pitiable appearance of the children we saw. "You call this bad?" he answered. "If you want to see starving and diseased children, go to Iran." He had just come from southern Persia. Azerbaijan, according to press dispatches, has a lower standard of living than the rest of the country, and that is one cause of the political trouble. The contrast, however, is a double one. Across the Soviet border, in the Azerbaijanian SSR, oil has made Baku the most modern city of the Soviet Union. The little republic has 600,000 children in school, and more than one hundred universities, colleges and technical schools. With the highest and the lowest standards of living in all Asia found side by side in the two Azerbaijans, it is utterly futile to talk of keeping the two apart unless Russian oil development—the economic source of the high standard in one—is kept out of the other. Oil in southern Iran, under British and American ownership, does not seem to produce the same effect.

Soviet policy in relation to the Dardanelles, and toward Manchuria, follows the czarist pattern of pushing south for better access to the sea. It is dangerous or not, according to the ultimate motive. In Manchuria, the Soviets no doubt are working to place the Chinese Communists in power, not because they are communistic (they are hardly more so than the farmers of Minnesota and North Dakota) but because they are coöperative. Even if they gain full control, a revolution in their own thinking would be required before they would take Manchuria into the Soviet Union. It was Chiang, not the Communists, who made the Port Arthur lease. Russia's request for a Dardanelles base either is founded on an underestimate of the atomic bomb, which renders such a base worthless, or is the ultimate item in a trading list designed to strengthen Soviet political influence in the Balkans and Central Europe. It could be mere weight-throwing, but looks more like throwing a scare.

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The Russian offer to backtrack on Tripolitania and the Dodecanese Islands, in exchange for a transfer of Trieste from Italian to Yugoslav control, produced the terrified conclusion among some diplomats and commentators that the Soviets planned to have Yugoslavia develop Trieste as a naval base from which Russia could control the Mediterranean. Quite aside from the fact that no navy on an inland sea can control anything in the atomic age, why should Russia make a sacrifice to develop such a base at Trieste, when the same thing can be done by utilizing Fiume and the Gulf of Quernaro? On the other hand, is not Russia gaining exactly what she wants by giving up a demand outmoded by the atomic bomb, in order to win credit for zealously supporting Yugoslavia's most cherished desire?

Part of the trouble is that the Western democracies refuse to apply the same standards to the Soviets as to themselves. We seek (and are refused) a military base in Iceland, two-thirds of the way by air from New York to Moscow, the key point on the water route to Murmansk. This demand is directed against nobody, and the Russians should not be alarmed. But if Russia sought that same base, what would be our reaction? Furthermore, the Russians don't like to be given a certificate of second-class citizenship in the world they helped to save. The Soviet Union is a European, Middle Eastern and Far Eastern power. It cannot be relegated to the back row in any of these theatres.

Treatment of Russia as an inferior aggravates a chestiness which results from her swift rise to power. The result is a combination of far-sighted shrewdness and foolish truculence. Soviet territorial aims, whether morally justifiable or not (and on that point they are mixed), seem definitely limited in scope and explainable by a valid desire for security in a world that does not look too friendly. This feeling is strengthened if one compares Russia's geographic position with that of the United States.

The USA is a continental nation with great seaports on two oceans, possessing a fortified interoceanic canal and far-flung air and naval bases, with more in prospect. The Soviet Union contains one-sixth of the land surface of the earth and one-twelfth of its population. It has a salt-water frontier 24,000 miles long, containing *not one* ice-free seaport except in the Black Sea and land-locked Caspian. To visualize its dearth of marine transport, consider the fact that Baku, on the Caspian, shipped a greater volume of goods by water just before the war than all the other seaports of the Soviet Union put together.

A country which tries to alter that situation, and at the same time prevent the recurrence of an invasion that killed twenty millions of its citizens, may be subject to criticism for its methods, but hardly to the charge of plotting against the peace of the world. Those who see a world menace in the territorial aims of the USSR probably would see the same thing without them.

Has a New Depression Begun?

by George Soule

WALL STREET WRITERS have recently uncorked their phials of gloom. Conservatives say the OPA, strikes and a bungling government are preventing business from producing goods and making profits. Some believe we have already had inflation and are now sliding down to depression. There's a buyers' strike and increasing unemployment, they say—1920-21 all over again.

When stocks don't go up, the speculative community believes the human race is doomed. When stocks rise, all's well with the world. If Consolidated Cream preferred falls ⅜, it's because Azerbaijan quarrels with Tehran. If Jupiter Corporation rises ⅛, it's because Congress has thumbed its nose at Mr. Truman.

Recorded facts indicate that this is neither 1920 nor 1921. We may have runaway inflation, but we haven't had it yet. If it comes, it will not be the same kind as in 1920. The end of that boom was not caused by a buyers' strike. There is no buyers' strike now; it would help Chester Bowles if there were. If a depression has now begun, it is contrary to all previous experience.

THIS ISN'T 1920

In the inflation of the First World War and after, production did not rise to match the tremendously increased demand for goods. At the peak of 1918 war spending, industrial production was only 17 percent above the depression level of 1914. Nor did production grow much above that in the postwar boom—it was 19 percent above 1914 in the latter part of 1919 and the first half of 1920.

Price control was applied tardily, and then only to materials, not at the retail level. There was no compulsory rationing of individual consumers. The consequence was that in 1918 wholesale prices were already 96 percent above 1913 and the cost of living 50 percent higher. When the Armistice came, all controls were ditched. By 1920 wholesale prices had risen to 128 percent above prewar, and the cost of living to 107 percent above, or more than double.

At the peak of war demand in 1943, industrial production was more than two and one-third times larger

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than in the prewar years 1935-39. It tapered off after that with the decline of military demand. But even in the strike-bound, reconversion-confused month of February, 1946, industrial production stood at an index number of 150, or half again as large as prewar. This compares with 162 in 1941, a year in which, in addition to munitions production, Americans bought more food and other goods for civilian use than ever before.

In this war, with price control and rationing, wholesale prices rose 37 percent, 1939 to 1945, and the cost of living (official index) about 30 percent. Since then both indices have gone up two or three points more. You can call that inflation if you like, but it is less than a third the amount which existed in 1920.

What caused the postwar inflation of 1919-20? Aside from the failure of production to increase, the lack of price control and the continuance of governmental spending, the main cause was something that is now absent. Business speculated on rising prices by buying enormous quantities of goods, using bank credit to do so. Business inventories grew *$6 billion* in 1919 alone —about four times as much as in any year of the following decade except 1923, and about twice as much as in 1923. Two-thirds of this increase was accounted for by the growth in the physical volume of stocks on hand and one-third by the rise in prices.

Between June, 1919, and June, 1920, loans and investments of member banks of the Federal Reserve System increased $2 billion, Federal Reserve notes in circulation increased 20 percent and the ratio between reserves and circulation fell to less than 41 percent—40 percent being the legal minimum.

Now the government is controlling inventories. Most business concerns cannot get goods as fast as they can be sold to consumers. Bank credit is not being recklessly expanded and reserves are ample.

In spite of relatively large production of most consumer goods, the people as a whole have much more money to spend than can be paid for the existing stocks of goods at existing ceiling prices. That is what makes black markets. Who ever heard of black markets in a depression? Current income payments were, at the peak of February, 1945, nearly two and one-half times the 1935-39 level. The index number was 245. By January of this year it had shrunk only to 232. In addition, there are huge accumulations of war savings in cash and bonds. If inflation comes this time, it will be because consumers spend their money faster than production can be increased. If it is to come, it is still ahead of us.

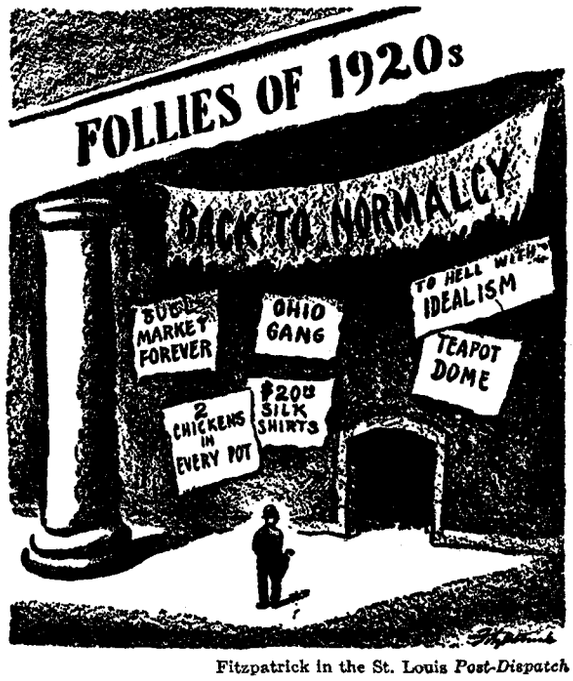
This Isn't 1921

Ever since the collapse which began in the middle of 1920, there has been a legend that it was caused by a "buyers' strike"—people stopped buying, it was charged, because prices were too high, and so the plug of prosperity was pulled. Figures refute this legend. Consumers spent $53.9 billion in 1919 and $62.9 billion in 1920. In 1921 consumers' spending did drop to $56.1 billion, but prices fell even more. In terms of constant purchasing power (reckoned in 1929 prices) consumers spent $48.9 billion in 1919, $50.9 billion in 1920 and $53 billion in 1921. This means that right through the inflation and deflation, consumers bought more goods each year than the year before.

What did happen was that in 1920 business could not clear its shelves of its huge inventories, at the prices asked. It could not continue to hold the goods, because the bank loans on which the expansion had been based had to be reduced. Cancellations of orders rose to a flood. Stocks were liquidated at heavy sacrifice. Unemployment grew. On the export market, foreigners had less money with which to buy wheat, beef and other commodities, while access to other sources of supply was reopened. Crop prices were cut in half.

If there was no buyers' strike in 1920, there is not likely to be any in 1946, when consumers have bigger backlogs of demand and more money than they can spend. Department-store sales are greater than ever—in February they were two and a quarter times prewar. Employment is higher than in 1941. Full production of automobiles, houses and many other ardently desired things is not yet in sight. Foreign demand for crops is not falling, to put it mildly. The danger is that we shall reach the limit of the labor supply before enough goods are produced.

The waverings of the business indices since last fall are due almost entirely to strikes in automobiles, steel, copper, coal and elsewhere. Strikes can't last forever. Inflation may come, and after it, depression. But it's too early to look for a slump while the storm warnings are still in the inflationary quarter.



Fitzpatrick in the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*

Repeat Performance?

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Doctor's Dream in Harlem

by Ralph G. Martin

It was the New York State Department of Social Welfare on the telephone:

"Sorry, Dr. Wertham, but we're refusing the request for a license for your Lafargue Clinic."

"But why?"

"Because we've decided that there's just no need for a psychiatric clinic in Harlem."

"Well, if there's no need for our clinic, can you please give me the names and addresses of all the other places where I can send my Negro patients?"

Long pause.

"Even if there is a need, we're still not satisfied with your financial status."

"But we don't need any money. Everybody is contributing his services absolutely free."

"Yes, but what about your rent?"

"That's free, too."

(Laughter.) "But for how long?"

"For eternity. . . ."

IT ALL STARTED 15 years ago with a dream, a dream based on an idea, an idea that psychoanalysis and psychotherapy are not the private property of the rich but the common property of the people.

"And I don't want anybody to get an idea we're specializing in some interracial project, because we're not," said Dr. Frederic Wertham. "We're here in Harlem because this is where the need is the greatest. And we're not here to make a study of the Negro, because the Negroes' problem is just an exaggeration of what happens to all other people anyway. Only here it's so much more naked and obvious. We're simply here to treat them like any other human beings."

He had a name for the treatment. He called it "Social Psychiatry." It meant that a psychiatrist had to understand a patient's economic and community life, as well as his sex life, before he could treat him properly.

Before the Lafargue Clinic was born in Harlem two months ago, there was nothing and nobody for the mentally sick Negro. Except Bellevue. And overcrowded, understaffed Bellevue has an unenviable reputation in Harlem. Negroes have to be carried in there; few walk in. The few who do are told things like this:

"There's nothing wrong with you. You're a Negro. You think too much, that's all. . . ."

Or:

"Yes, you do need further treatment. We recommend that you see a private psychiatrist."

But who? Where? A white psychiatrist almost never accepts Negro clientele for fear of losing his rich white patients. Those who do, accept them only after regular working hours, and for much higher rates. As for Negro psychiatrists in this country, there are only eight who have been able to cut through the discriminatory red tape of medical schools.

But what about everybody else, the people who couldn't pay? The happy, normal 14-year-old kid who became suddenly obsessed with the fact of being a Negro and tried to kill two children so they wouldn't have to grow up into a world of prejudice; the little girl who became preoccupied with sexual problems because she lived with her mother, who was a prostitute; the woman who wanted to commit suicide because she was fired from too many jobs by bosses who saw her as a color instead of a human being.

What about them? Where did they go for help, for advice, for treatment?

They went nowhere. Theirs was a blank, blind wall. The suicide rate went up; juvenile delinquency in Harlem reached a high of 53 percent of the city total. And a lot of people clucked their tongues and said what a terrible shame it was.

But nobody did a damn thing about it. Nobody seemed to care.

Except Dr. Wertham, who was still trying to peddle that dream of his. One supposedly liberal rich man listened to him, then smiled indulgently.

"My good Dr. Wertham, yours is a *magnificent* plan, but everybody knows that Negroes don't need any psychiatry. Negroes are just a happy-go-lucky people who are always able to laugh away their troubles. Besides, there are so many reasons why your dream isn't feasible. There are 400,000 Negroes in Harlem. A tiny clinic like yours won't even make a dent. And, my dear Dr. Wertham, do you honestly expect the

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Negroes to come to you, to trust you? One other thing. By placing your clinic in Harlem, aren't you actually practising segregation?"

Dr. Wertham slammed the door when he left.

ONE NIGHT Wertham was discussing the dream all over again with Richard Wright and some Negro friends. Suddenly he said, "If we can't get the money to do it, let's do it without money. . . ."

They stared at him. "Well, why not?"

They all looked at each other and laughed. "That's right, why not?"

Assembling the staff was simple. There were several prominent psychiatrists, some of his former pupils, who had heard Dr. Wertham's dream a long time ago and were still excited about it. There was a young Negro psychiatrist who wanted to be part of the plan. Then four Negro social workers, a psychologist and a secretary, and that was it. "When do we start?"

But that was the tough job: to find a rent-free place in Harlem for their clinic.

For months they went searching through the Harlem ghetto, where an average of 1,100 people were living on each acre, compared to 600 on the crowded lower East Side and only 266 an acre for the rest of the city.

They were still searching when Ralph Ellison suggested they talk to the Reverend Shelton Hale Bishop at St. Philip's Episcopal Church. In Harlem, Bishop was the big push behind social-welfare projects, especially summer camps for kids.

Bishop was anxious to help.

"But Dr. Wertham, all I can offer you are these two small, dirty rooms in the basement of our parish house. . . ."

"Father Bishop, that's wonderful. . . ."

The rooms were still dirty when the whole staff paid their first visit. Dirty and empty, except for a small red table and some benches.

But sitting on the benches, waiting, were the first two patients: a frightened young woman with big, pleading eyes and a man whose eyes were filled with emptiness.

And before they washed the windows or swept the floor, they interviewed their patients. The woman had lost her job and spent all $300 of her savings for a psychiatrist who gave her ten shock treatments—which she shouldn't have had—and then dismissed her.

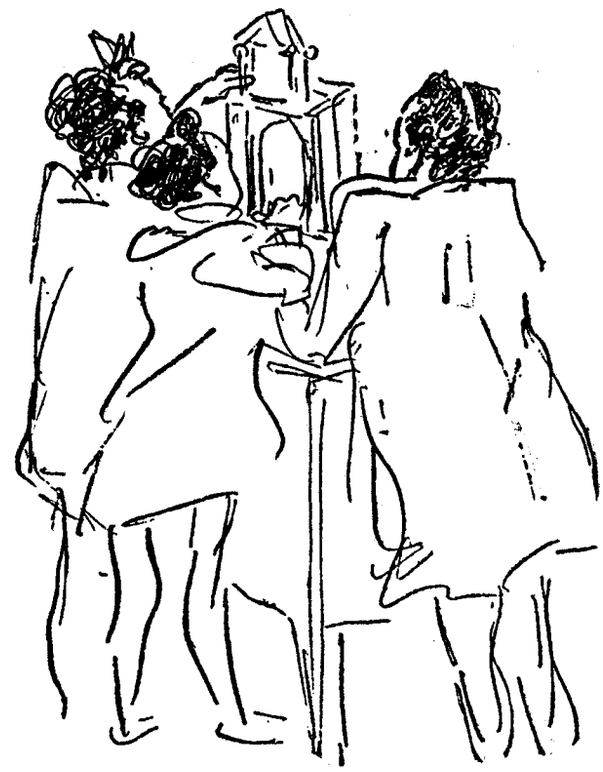
The man was a more serious case, so serious that Dr. Wertham dictated a letter to his secretary, who wrote it out in longhand, because she had no typewriter. Father Bishop took the letter and the patient in a taxicab to Bellevue for immediate hospitalization.

The news spread fast, and every Tuesday and Friday evening the people were waiting.

They were just people with troubles, all kinds of troubles. Real, practical troubles piled on top of psychotic ones. People who were frustrated because they lived in the rotten tenements of a dirty, filthy iron-bound ghetto; because they went to war to fight for a democracy they didn't have; because their kids had no place to play and were forming gangs; because they had poor jobs and worse pay; because their skin was black.

They were people pressed down into a feeling of miserable helplessness, pressed down so far that they were mentally and physically sick and tired of living.

So they stood there outside the door on Tuesday or Friday evening, patiently waiting for a psychiatrist to give them a thin slice of hope and meaning.



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Four psychiatrists, each in his own cubicle, separated from the rest of the room by screens. And afterwards, if you had a quarter and wanted to pay, you dropped it in the box. Otherwise, everything was free. If you needed carfare to New Jersey, they'd lend it to you; if you didn't have enough money for medicine, they'd buy it for you. No red tape, no appointments necessary. You simply walked in off the street and nobody was interested in your skin color, race, religion, sex or politics. You were just somebody who needed help.

"For me, one of the wonderful things about the clinic is that these people come here without fear on their faces, without suspicion," said one of the women psychiatrists. "They come here as if they've been waiting a long, long time for the place to open. And they have a pride about the place. They get a kick out of each new piece of furniture as if it belonged to them. One of my patients even said he was going to make a lamp for us at school. . . ."

"My dear Dr. Wertham, do you honestly expect the Negroes to come to you, to trust you. . . ."

ALONGSIDE one of the cubicles, the four Negro social workers were talking about their cases.

"There was one old woman who came here often," one of them said. "There was nothing wrong with her and she knew it, but she was just lonely. She just wanted somebody to talk to."

They have all kinds of jobs: check up on those who fail to keep return appointments, help find new jobs for those who need them, talk to parents about their maladjusted kids, figure out recreational possibilities where they don't exist.

"The big thing is to get the kids here," said the social worker in charge of children's case work. "We try to get them here while they're maladjusted and before they're delinquent.

"Because once they're delinquent, they don't stand a chance. The courts usually don't bother much with Negro kids; they send them directly to such places as the State Institution for Mental Defectives. They don't belong there at all: they come out of there bitter and mean and ready for crime. They belong in psychiatric clinics, where we can give them treatment and a hope and a direction."

He told about the Negro boy who had been taken to Bellevue for a psychiatric examination and the doctor said he had sexual fantasies because he sang a song that started out, "Don't you feel my leg because when you feel my leg, you're gonna feel my thigh. . . ."

"God Almighty," said the social worker, "everybody in Harlem knows that song. It's a popular recording. That psychiatrist just didn't know Harlem, that's all. Before he can diagnose that kid, he should know the cultural pattern of the community, what the kid lived through and how it affected him. That, again, is social psychiatry. . . ."

There were more people drifting into the room, going into the cubicles with the psychiatrists. Some stayed ten minutes, some a half-hour.

"I've been married for five months and my wife is frigid. . . ."

"People are after me . . ." said the young girl with frightened eyes.

"I came back from the Pacific and found out my wife was sleeping with another man. I don't want to give her up but I can't forgive her. I got two kids. I'm going crazy. . . ."

"This is my mother. She was in an asylum and I took her out because I thought she was cured. But she's getting worse and I'm a nervous wreck now. I don't want to send her back to that asylum, but what can I do?"

A skinny, ragged kid in knickers walking in bashfully: "I cut my finger. Can you fix it?"

The door to the second room opened and Dr. Wertham came out laughing, waving a letter. "It's from the State Department of Social Welfare. They won't give us a license, but they're already sending us patients. . . ."

He looked at his watch and his eyes twinkled. "This clinic was supposed to be closed an hour ago." Then he went back into his room with another patient.

"There's a great man," said his secretary after he closed the door. "I mean, besides being one of the greatest psychiatrists in the country. He's always doing things for people, especially the people that nobody else cares about."

She took out some letters. "Here's the response we're getting":

"Please accept my small donation of two dollars. I will try to send this every few weeks. Thanks for the privilege. . . ."

"Enough people talk and think sympathetically about conditions in Harlem, but too few of us do something about it. Please accept my small contribution. I wish I could give more. . . ."

THE SECRETARY leaned on the small red table, almost caressing it. "But the Doctor says that no matter how much money we get or how big we get or where we move to, we'll always keep this first table."

She thought of something and her eyes grew serious. "Better not use any names in the story. All these people have jobs during the day and you'd be surprised how many people hate us for what we're doing. They're afraid that other people will look at us and see that it can be done and maybe there'll be free mental-hygiene clinics sprouting up all over the city, all over the country."

She opened her arms, groping for words, "I only hope it does. . . . I hope the idea grows as big . . . as big as Dr. Wertham's heart."

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Let Them Eat Statistics

by A. Powell Davies

THE SLOW DEATH of famine is moving in an ever widening sweep two-thirds around the earth. We are not stopping it. Our national program to meet the need is one of delusion, cross-purpose, delay and insufficiency. Everything we do is "too little, too late." Unless our inadequate national planning is revised at once so that we do what is necessary instead of what is easiest, the tragic betrayal of the world's hungry people in 1945 and 1946 will be followed by a still worse betrayal in 1947 and 1948.

The benevolent-minded Mr. Hoover, in spite of his good intentions, has not demanded what is necessary. Indeed, it may well be that for a second time in American history Mr. Hoover will prove to be a despondent symbol of the ineffectual, the unavailing. He wants a voluntary basis of solution, such as he has always wanted. He resists "governmental interference," just as he has always done. He is against rationing. Yet without rationing no adequate and honest program of relief is feasible or realistic.

Meanwhile, according to Mr. Harold Weston, director of Food for Freedom (which from the beginning has interpreted the extent and gravity of the problem accurately), Mr. Hoover has made the serious error in his recent famine report of including the supplies for April twice, thereby giving the impression that he is not scaling down the stated requirements by more than four million tons, when, in fact, he is scaling them down by seven million tons.

Mr. Weston, who is more interested in correcting the figures and getting the food shipped than in blaming anybody, has been loudly crying for an explanation of the Hoover error. Nobody has given him one. The standard reply has been, "We do not know the reason; we cannot explain it."

It seems equally hard to explain the versatile performance of Clinton Anderson, our blithely schizothymic Secretary of Agriculture. He is able, it seems, to be buoyant, high-spirited and optimistic in all circumstances, even in the face of a record of incompetence that it would be hard to equal in United States history. Strangely enough, all his blunders promote the interests of food processors and the larger and more potent farm interests. "America must eat better," he says. What shall the rest of the world eat? False statistics? Let us put the case of Mr. Anderson as kindly as we can: If a man cannot rise to the level of the problems he must solve, he should at least make way for men who can.

American food consumption per person is now 14 percent greater than it was before the war. If we doubled our overseas shipments, and thus saved countless lives, it would still be five percent greater. Is it strange that the United States, once the shining focus of a stricken earth's reviving hope, is rapidly becoming the most hated nation in the world? We are betraying the future. We are handing back the victory to the dead man, Hitler, just as he predicted. Only the least that we could possibly have done, have we been willing to do. Unscathed within our own territory, our cities and countryside unharmed by the ravages of war, in gratitude to those who bore the brunt of the struggle we have flung the crumbs from our table. We have allowed the little-minded, shrunken-hearted men among our leaders to have their way. The lethargy of the gluttonous has stupefied us, while in the halls of government, perfidy grows rampant and conscience sleeps. Shall we be surprised if we learn that the entire earth has come to hate and resent abundant, selfish, unrationed America?

IT IS TIME for the people to speak. No one will represent their better nature unless they insist upon it. No one will disperse the emissaries of entrenched greed until the people are angry enough to demand it.

At a third emergency conference on May 22, Food for Freedom assembled in Washington the delegates of some sixty or more national organizations and agencies. A sixfold plan was adopted and carried to the President, comprising the following proposals: a prompt revival of rationing; establishment of an international food commission; increases in allocation of grain for immediate shipment overseas; adoption of a maximum production program to supplant the present restrictive basis; continuing and strengthening of UNRRA; and retention of government controls and ceilings on food.

This is not Hoover's program. Nor is it Anderson's. Nor the Administration's, at the moment. But ex-Governor Lehman gives his backing to it, and some who are compelled to be silent are anxiously hoping for it. It is supported by those who are in a position to know, and *want* to know and *act* upon the facts.

The first year of peace has brought us to the lowest point in United States history. It is our meanest hour. Have we fortitude enough to recognize it and decency enough to take the necessary steps to end it?

A. Powell Davies is Minister of All Souls' Unitarian Church, Washington, D. C. He is the author of The Faith of an Unrepentant Liberal, *just published, and president of Food for Freedom.*

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Jackson's Last Days

by Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.

In normal times under a democracy the community is likely to be divided by issues of social reform. But every once in a while more imperative issues arise, which, instead of dividing people, unite them, from right to left, in defense of the values they suddenly discover they hold in common. The liberal must recognize such priorities and not ignore the new overshadowing evil in pursuit of the habitual reform. He must not forget slavery, because white workers are still in misery, or forget fascism, because Negroes are lynched. But, at the same time, he must not kid himself into thinking that the new fight will necessarily promote reform.

Wars are generally not revolutions, especially when you win them. Thus the Civil War, like the two World Wars, diverted a good deal of energy and severed valuable continuities; but, with all the advantages of hindsight, one can hardly say that any of these wars were mistakes. And, for all the loss in continuity, great men like Jackson and Franklin Roosevelt leave memories which become a positive political force and contain the stuff for their own revival.

AMERICAN HISTORY has been marked by recurrent swings of conservatism and of liberalism. During the periods of inaction, unsolved social problems pile up till the demand for reform becomes overwhelming. Then a liberal government comes to power, the dam breaks and a flood of change sweeps away a great deal in a short time. After fifteen or twenty years the liberal impulse is exhausted, the day of "consolidation" and inaction arrives, and conservatism, once again, expresses the mood of the country, but generally on the terms of the liberalism it displaces. So with Jacksonian democracy. In time it satisfied the popular desire for change. As it developed vested party interests of its own, and its internal paths to power became choked up, able younger men—the Sewards, Lincolns, Thaddeus Stevenses—began to go into the opposition. Partly because of this infusion of fresh blood, and partly because of the lessons of defeat, the Whigs soft-pedaled their diehard aims and began to borrow the Jacksonian phrases. They prepared for the popular reaction. Their reward was victory in 1840.

Defeat was a terrific blow to Democratic morale. Not since 1796, nearly half a century before, had a conservative candidate gained the presidency. (Even John Quincy Adams was elected as a Jeffersonian Republican.) Moreover, the people had not only chosen a conservative, but they had chosen a conservative masquerading, as it seemed to the Jacksonians, clumsily and cynically as a democrat.

President Van Buren, quiet and urbane in the White House, took refuge in what became the official explanation: that he had lost because of fraud and corruption—the only theory which accounted for the defeat without impugning the party faith in the masses. "The sober, second thought of the people," he had said some years before, "is never wrong, and always efficient." Democrats now retired from office to await the fruits of this consoling maxim.

William Henry Harrison had been elected as a figurehead, whom Clay and Webster and, doubtless, others had severally calculated on controlling. His early death installed John Tyler of the Virginia states'-rights school in the White House. While Tyler's training had allowed him to join the Whigs in attacking executive despotism, it did not incline him to support the more arrantly Federalist items in the Whig program. He submitted to the repeal of the independent treasury; but, when Henry Clay pushed through a new Bank charter, Tyler returned it with a resolute veto.

AT FIRST, it was like a cloud on the horizon, as they said later, no bigger than a man's hand. Then it rose, black and threatening. Soon it would fill the sky. Who could escape the shadow it promised to cast across the Union? . . . But the wise had long known that America must sometime face its conscience. The promises of democracy might be slow to exert their force; but, if America was to justify the dream, those promises had to be redeemed. Negro bondage was a living challenge to the American ethic—it was, said John Quincy Adams in 1820, "the great and foul stain upon the North American Union." Eventually the moral feeling of the land must wash it away, or the nation would lose its soul. "The seeds of the Declaration of Independence are yet maturing," wrote Adams as he watched the swirl of fear and hatred around the question of the admission of Missouri as a slave state. "The harvest will be what West, the painter, calls the terrible sublime."

Slavery was the most accusing, the most tragic and the most dangerous of all questions. It was implacable, it could not be winked away by compromise, and, as

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Adams knew in 1820, no man ought ever to agitate it without being prepared for the dissolution of the Union, "and reconciled to it, because it must end in that." The nation knew this, too, in its heart of hearts, and like a man banishing a dreaded image from consciousness, it turned and twisted desperately to suppress and deny and bury the terrible fact. For almost a quarter of a century after the Missouri crisis, slavery was blocked from gaining full embodiment as a specific political issue. The trauma of 1820 was too intense. Yet the question could not be exorcised by repression.

The Jacksonians in the thirties were bitterly critical of abolitionists. The outcry against slavery, they felt, distracted attention from the vital economic questions of Bank and currency, while at the same time it menaced the Southern alliance so necessary for the success of the reform program. A good deal of Jacksonian energy, indeed, was expended in showing how the abolition movement was a conservative plot. Ely Moore spoke for much of labor in his charge that the Whigs planned to destroy the power of the Northern working classes by freeing the Negro "to compete with the Northern white man in the labor market."

The Jacksonians reminded the abolitionists that reform began at home. "We hear the philanthropist moaning over the fate of the Southern slave," said Seth Luther, "when there are *thousands* of children in this State as truly slaves as the blacks of the South." One workingman, rising in a union meeting, observed that he heard much talk about emancipating the blacks; "but equal rights ought to be established at home first, and emancipation of the white slaves be effected before we go abroad." Some Northerners wondered quite honestly whether the slave was not better off in view of the helplessness of the free laborer in face of sickness and old age. "The want of liberty is a great drawback on happiness," remarked William M. Gouge: "but the slave is free from care." From reformers like Fanny Wright and Albert Brisbane to party leaders like Jackson and Van Buren the liberal movement united in denouncing the abolitionists.

BUT MANY Jacksonians could not subdue their private conviction that slavery was evil. "To say that I am utterly opposed to slavery in every form, civil, political, or domestic," declared Marcus Morton in 1837 in a typical outburst, "is saying very little; for how can any man under the influence of any moral or religious principle, or of any correct political notions, justify or excuse it? . . . I deem slavery to be the greatest curse and the most portentous evil which a righteous God ever inflicted upon a nation." George Bancroft had somewhat these views in his early years, though ambition prevented him from going out in front on so unpopular a question. Thomas Morris, a Van Buren Democrat from Ohio, emerged from the fight over abolition petitions as the first real anti-slavery Senator. An urbane Democratic lawyer named James G. Birney was speaking to earnest groups throughout the North about forming a Liberal Party. The Democrat in whom social radicalism and anti-slavery feeling united most impressively was William Leggett. Amos Kendall's act in barring abolitionist propaganda from the Southern mails knocked Leggett off the party line in 1835, and his growing perception of the kinship between Negro slavery and other forms of class exploitation made him by 1838 an open anti-slavery man.

THE RISE of anti-slavery sentiment presents a complex problem of historical causation. At bottom, the anti-slavery impulse was a moral impulse. No cause can command the deepest loyalties and the greatest sacrifices of men till it is presented under a moral aspect. It has been pointed out, by historical materialists, that crusades succeed only when they fill economic needs; but it could as well be said that crusades succeed only when they fill moral needs. The two motives are inseparable, and the presence of one does not discredit the other, as the Marxists appear capable of acknowledging only when their own crusade is concerned. Every moral movement in history has required a certain configuration of social and economic conditions for success, but this does not make it any less a moral movement, nor need we regard the Northerners who fought the Civil War as fools, deluded idealists or the agents of a predatory capitalism.

In essence, the emotion which moved the North finally to battlefield and bloodshed was moral disgust. So long as the slave power did not interfere with Northern aspirations, the disgust remained the property of "fanatics"—that is, of people so dominated by ethical motives that they were disinterestedly impelled to attack slavery.

But when the claims of the South began to constitute a concrete threat to Northern political intentions, then moral repugnance spread wide among the great mass of the people, and anti-slavery sentiment appeared in new sections of the community. The political grounds of anti-slavery were as indispensable as the religious, and perhaps more potent in stirring up the common man. Aspirations which were first felt to be menaced by the slave power were in actuality democratic aspirations, that part of the population increasingly indulgent of Southern pretensions was the business community of the North, and the group which took the lead on the political stage in combating the slave power were the radical Democrats in the straight Jacksonian tradition.

The party of Jackson was badly split. The Northern radical wing, under the leadership of Martin Van Buren and his brilliant son John, established the Free Soil Party in 1848. The fighting Republican Party of 1856 was its beneficiary. In the meantime, the eternal

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Southern Democrats, victims of one crop and two races, had to cleave irrevocably to their peculiar institutions.

THE Jacksonian unity was breaking down. And Old Hickory himself? The old man still refused to die. His body was racked by the pain of old wounds, his constitution undermined by the hardships of the Creek campaign thirty years before; but his will was adamant, and on he lived. Years of tobacco chewing had left him with throbbing temples and shattering headaches. Tuberculosis had wasted away one lung and diseased the other. Dropsy and diarrhea had reduced him to helplessness, and his remedies were primitive—bleeding to check hemorrhage, and calomel. Tall, ghostlike and fleshless, with his brush of snow-white hair, he could eat little more than rice and milk.

Yet he clung to life with unconquerable toughness. No stab of suffering could extract from him a word of irritation or self-pity. His intellect remained as keen and vigorous as ever, and his manner, as Paulding noted when visiting the Hermitage in 1842, "more kind, graceful, and benevolent, than that of any man who has ever fallen under my observation." He ruled his plantation like a patriarch. In the morning, when he could rise, he would ride around the land, pausing to talk with his favorite groom about the colts, then to the fields, where the Negroes picking cotton gave three cheers for him. In the evening he conducted family prayers. And always he followed politics with avidity, never ceasing to make fierce and decisive suggestions about the destiny of his nation. . . . But death was irresistible, and even General Jackson could not stay its hand.

The shadows fell longer over the Hermitage, and in the late afternoons the old General, leaning on his tall ebony cane, would walk up and down the long porch; then, in the last flare of sunset, he would stride, erect and steady, across the green lawns to his wife's grave. Eighteen-forty-four gave way to 1845, and Mr. Polk was safely installed in the presidency. June came, with the still, heavy heat of Tennessee summer. On the morning of Sunday, June 8, after a week of unusual feebleness, the General fell into dead-pale unconsciousness. A long wail of anguish rose up from the slaves in the house and echoed through the fields and stables. "Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord! Old Massa's dead! Old Massa's dead!" But soon the mists fell away, and the old man recovered consciousness. Major Lewis arrived at the bedside at noon to receive messages for Benton, for Blair, for Sam Houston.

On pressed the afternoon, and around the high bedstead with the tall mahogany posts his friends stood in tears. Outside the window the slaves clustered in lamentation, and his body servants joined the group in the room. "Do not cry," said the dying man, rousing himself for a moment, "I shall meet you in heaven, yes I hope to meet you all in heaven, white and black." A new burst of moaning greeted his words. He looked around. "Why should you weep? I am in the hands of the Lord! who is about to relieve me. You should rejoice, not weep!" "Oh, do not cry. Be good children, and we will all meet in heaven." He was given an anodyne and did not speak again. At six o'clock, with the evening sun flooding through the windows, he had a slight convulsion, his underjaw dropped and his breathing faded so gently that they hardly knew when he died. Sarah Yorke Jackson, who was holding his hand, suddenly fainted, and they carried her away. Through the plantation spread the moan of death.

The funeral was a great mass meeting, white and black jostling together in an agony of grief, cramming the house and waiting patiently outside to follow the body to its resting place in the shade beside his beloved Rachel. Between the funeral sermon and the burial a wildly twittering parrot, a household pet, broke into raucous profanity and was taken away. When the body was lowered into the grave, the stone was left off for all to look a last time. The slave women in their anguish pressed in among the friends of their old master, leaving the laces and shawls of white women wet with tears. "Death did not make all equal," said one observer, "more completely than did this funeral."

PONDERING next day on Jackson's greatness, Justice Catron was tempted to ascribe it all to the magnificence of his leadership. "The way a thing should be done struck him plainly—& he adopted the plan." If it were not the best, it would still do, if well executed. "To the execution he brought a hardy industry, and a sleepless energy few could equal." But most of all, "his awful *will* stood alone, & was made the will of all he commanded."

"Hence it is," said Catron, "that timid men, and feeble women, have rushed to onslaught when he gave the command—fierce, fearless and unwavering, for the first time." Hence it was that for fifty years he had been followed by the broad land; hence it was that he had swept over all opposition, "terrible and clean as a prairie fire, leaving hardly a smoke of the ruin behind."

The people felt an emptiness in their hearts. Michael Shiner, the poor free Negro of the Washington shipyards, set forth their aching sorrow: "the Hon. Major General andrew Jackson is gone and his voice are heared no moore on earth. But his name still lives in the heart of the American people his spirit has takein its fligth it has gone to the one that first gave it and now i trust he is setting on the Right hand of god reaping his reward."

This is the last of ten instalments—30,000 words in all—from The Age of Jackson *(Little, Brown), condensed with the approval of the author, who has added some new material further to point up the many parallels between our own times and those of a century ago.* — THE EDITORS

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The Old Vic: II

Uncle Vanya, translated from Chekhov by Constance Garnett. Century Theatre, May 13, 1946.
Oedipus Rex, English version by W. B. Yeats, and The Critic, by Richard Brinsley Sheridan. May 20, 1946.

IT WOULD be a mistake to think of "Uncle Vanya" as one of Chekhov's earlier plays and therefore not in his mature style, the style of "The Three Sisters" and "The Cherry Orchard." It was written in 1902, two years before "The Cherry Orchard," his last play. "Uncle Vanya" is profoundly characteristic. It would also be a mistake to set the play down as "gloomy," which is often done. "Uncle Vanya" is tragic, not gloomy; nothing so intense and so inwardly active and alive could be dismissed as merely gloomy. It would, also, be called by Chekhov, with his sensitive, observant, human, doctor's mind, a comedy.

The traditional English interest in characters provides one easy explanation of the choice of the play for the Old Vic's repertory. On this basis Mr. Olivier as Astrov, the country doctor, Mr. Richardson as Uncle Vanya, Mr. Nicholas Hannen as the Professor, and various other players, would give performances intelligent and highly competent. The great necessity, however, in playing such Chekhov drama is a full flowing together of all those living their roles, creating from within a single, whole movement of life and mutual response, an entire faith—no player at any moment seeing any detail with his tongue in his cheek as it were—an entire faith and an absorption by which the truth and mood are fully achieved. Without this, "Uncle Vanya" comes out pretty much a mere character piece.

As to the Old Vic's "Oedipus Rex," we may say that for people who do not know the story, or who have never read the play, or who have never seen it acted, this occasion of it will arouse a very considerable response and in some cases enthusiasm. The Yeats version is, of course, a great simplification of the Sophocles play, and is written in the beautiful words that belong to this great Irish poet. The pattern of the myth itself, as found and perfected by Sophocles, is monumental and sure-fire, based on all the technical devices of the Greek genius in drama. The appeal of the Old Vic's "Oedipus" is thus guaranteed for many.

The setting for the play by Mr. John Piper is effective, even dramatically creative in a limited way. It has two columns, suggestive only, with the curtained doorway, a grayish-sky backdrop and some archaic images of Apollo and two other gods such as Pausanias describes as existing centuries later. Once the suppliants arise, however, and Oedipus and others enter and the chorus takes over, the archaism is all over and forgotten. This is a matter of unity in a work of art—in a theatre production as a whole—not of archaic stylization; for there is no reason the production of this "Oedipus" should be archaic; I am anxious to be understood on that point. The costumes by Miss Marie-Helene Daste are a part of the debacle. They are many and varied. They employ Greek designs, some archaic, some in the more familiar classic modes, and some in the stereotyped manner supposed in the course of time by the theatre to be highly classical. But these costumes were made with so little fundamental conception of costume cutting that they were largely without either historical or—what, of course, is the important point—dramatic value. They were, also, for the most part badly worn, not carried with any style at all by the wearers. Most of the wigs had no style or expertness, and the same was true of the make-ups. Beards were not very frequent, though historically, if we go in for that, the Greeks did not begin to shave till Alexander's time, nearly a century after this play; and esthetically, beards, in the right style, help lessen the effect of triviality and encourage that of the heroic. Thus Mr. Olivier looked more like a Roman coin of the late Republic than an Attic hero or the Cumaean Zeus, the convention of the Periclean theatre. In all this let me say that I am not talking about stylization; you can go in for it or omit it as you please; I am talking about style as implying the significant relation between the thought and the outward, or visual, expression of it.

Mr. Richardson was Tiresias, the seer, in Greek legend a lofty figure touched with the gods' divinity. He played well in relation not to majesty of tone but in relation to the general approach to the play that the Old Vic has followed in its production. In the same manner, Mr. Harry Andrews' Creon was a dignified and excellent performance. Miss Ena Burrill, dressed out in an absurd but becoming costume such as we have seen often enough before this when ladies do classical heroines, was Jocasta, one of the great, subtly motivated and passionate Greek roles. She was lacking in any tragic quality whatever, and any impact of her performance was the sheer result of the deathless impact of words in themselves.

Mr. Nicholas Hannen, a good actor, did as well as could be as Leader of the Chorus. He was granted a beard; the chorus otherwise was beardless, grimly made up, and with their thin Nordic features looked more like witches than Theban elders. Yeats very wisely has greatly cut down the Chorus' part in the play; but any Greek chorus is by nature a stylization of the actuality; and obviously, having a group of people saying the same words in unison is a form of stylization. In neither of these respects was much done to help matters; and there were doubtless many in the audience who merely charged that off against the poor quaint Greeks.

Taking the Oedipus role from the usual point of view, that of heroic tragedy, we must note that Mr. Olivier in the first place has not the voice for it. His voice is fairly light, has small warmth or continuity of tone; his delivery of verse is based very often on a kind of jerky energy. It is a method of reading descended from Sir Henry Irving, who triumphed over having practically no voice at all. He used at one point, however, the celebrated wail, or cry of woe, that Mounet-Sully gave his Oedipus. In the greatest moment in all drama, usually considered so, that of Oedipus' entrance, blinded by his own hands—a dramatic image impossible to miss fire with—Mr. Olivier's change to an unaccountable, medieval-looking, very voluminous flopping brown garment contrived, by distracting the attention, to lessen, though it could not kill, the effect. Granting the general approach to the play, however, Mr. Olivier's performance has sincerity, intelligence and a certain degree of semi-projected intensity.

We must now take this "Oedipus" of the Old Vic from

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another angle. As a production in what we might call a popular style—at the other extreme indeed from what has been sought for by such as Granville-Barker, the French classical theatre, Reinhardt, the Moscow Art Theatre, the Russian Ballet under Diaghilev, and so on—the Old Vic has accomplished something that will give pleasure to many, even rapture to some. And Sophocles' play itself is practically indestructible, for which the Old Vic should thank the gods.

The company has a fine time with Sheridan's burlesque of the critic and the tragedy rehearsed. The décor is by Miss Tanya Moiseiwitsch. The settings are entertaining; the costumes jolly. Mr. Olivier, in velvet coat, high heels, snuff box, etc., made in this role one of those complete turnabouts that actor and audience alike delight in. Mr. Richardson's Lord Burleigh, contrived by the dramatist as a thinker not speaker of thoughts, played a capital burlesque, as did other men in the cast. Mr. Miles Malleson as Sir Fretful Plagiary gave a really first-rate example of English character acting.

STARK YOUNG

Crime Without Passion

"THE BLUE DAHLIA" is a tight movie about Los Angeles chiselers, coppers, cabaret-owners, peepers, husband-deserters, just discharged Navy fliers who do violence to each other with the dispatch and unconcern of a person stamping an envelope. It is the neatest treatment that has been done on a Raymond Chandler novel and is filled as much with Chandler's smartness (about Los Angeles County, its roads, its lush playgrounds; the looks and manners of high cops and low underworld yeggs; intimate views about gangsters that castrate them, make them weaker but more lovable), as it is with his Adrian-izing of Dashiell Hammett. Chandler makes the mayhem, drinking and talk stylized and arty; never allows his gangsters to lose their suavity, presence of mind, grace, sartorial elegance, wit in any kind of catastrophe; and turns everyone into a sophisticate—even the man in a union suit who operates a cut-throat flophouse.

The story concerns the terrible homecoming of three Navy buddies (Alan Ladd, William Bendix, Hugh Beaumont). Johnny (Alan Ladd), the one the others look up to most, finds that during his war years his wife has become an alcoholic, has killed his son, is in love with a cabaret-owner, so he leaves her. The next day, over a No. 2 with Orange Juice, he hears the police are after him for her murder, decides to avenge her and absolve himself, spends the next eight reels getting bounced around. The murderer turns out to be the person you give the least hang about. The two big notions "The Blue Dahlia" gets across are that (1) people today are living more destructively than ever, and killing, infidelity, hating and being hated all the time have become run-of-the-mill and all but boring, (2) the war veteran has been perfectly schooled to operate in a society similar to the one from which he was discharged. A wonderful example of the way the people in "The Blue Dahlia" respond to catastrophe is the final shot of the police chief (Tom Powers) looking a little done in for having blown up the murderer, annoyed in a minor way that he has been the least bit affected emotionally by having to kill the old man.

"The Blue Dahlia" has been hammered down by the director (George Marshall) into a movie that has almost no slack, confusion or ease. Its people think, talk and walk with the greatest consciousness of destruction. They live in unsentimentalized surroundings that show in bas-relief the bleakness, glare, determined, incisive movement, seediness of a city (particularly the way it looks at night). The movie is worthless during its blow-off scenes—when the husband and wife spit at each other, when the flier throws the ceiling at a gangster, when the shell-shocked ex-bombardier goes panicky at the sound of frivolous music (jumping, crazy music that is unusually effective), shoots out a match at twenty paces to prove he wouldn't have to be on top of a person to kill him. But when its people are going through the motions of every-day living—passing in and out of lobbies, motoring to the beach, asking to speak to someone on the phone—"The Blue Dahlia" is beautifully accurate in showing their tension, controlled behavior, suspiciousness and the personalities of people who don't expect to live long or happily. It is perfect on atmosphere. The drive the hero and heroine take to Malibu is gummed with literary chit-chat, but anyone who likes night driving will be pleased with the airiness, the 50-mile-an-hour movement, the lights of roadside drive-ins that flash by, the sense of having been on the road a long time.

The film is well acted from top to bottom and especially in the in-between roles: the acting of a slimy house detective by Will Wright; Tom Powers as a stubborn police captain; Howard da Silva as Eddie, the miserable hot shot who owns a cabaret and loses a trick to every person in the movie because he has more character, sensitivity and good will than his job demands. For some reason he's given a whole world of delicate feeling to put across—the kind that turns up occasionally in old gangster films, more often in French movies: for instance, his realization that he has lost a beautiful woman through his own faults and being frustrated half to death by her easy-as-pie tossing off of his advances. One wonderful episode is when the Navy hero clouts him as though he were swatting a fly; Eddie starts to hit back, realizes objectively he has no moral leg to stand on, having been intimate with the hero's wife, begs his pardon and leaves like a gentleman. Da Silva brings off a remarkable number of sides on the character. Tom Powers has a dyspeptic look that makes him seem completely self-absorbed, and he acts with humorlessness and tenacious earnestness. All of which makes you respect his ability as a bloodhound because you don't expect him to take his work lightly or to be swerved by sympathy for the suspects. He looks incorruptible and substantial, however much you may feel sorry for his suffering and want to help him. Along with his unyielding character, Powers is a fine actor who stands out in any film no matter how good the other players (he was the husband who was choked to death in "Double Indemnity"). Wright, as the voyeur, looks as if he never thought above the level of a filthy postcard, has a dirty voice that seems always to be squirming. He is excellent in showing curiosity over something vile he has done, as though he had completely forgotten having done it; also in portraying a person who only scares a little bit.

MANNY FARBER

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The Bandwagon

Mr. Knutson [R, Minn.], declining to say whether he opposed the [British] loan, told reporters today that he was approaching the subject "with an open mind." When the loan proposal first came to the Capitol, however, he asked: "Just what kind of saps do they think we are?"—*From the New York* Times.

B. J. C. writes: My ears stick out from my head. Do you advise plastic surgery to bring them closer so that I can keep my pencil in place?

Reply: Wouldn't it be simpler to keep the pencil in your pocket? – *From Dr. Van Dellen's column in the New York* Daily News.

"Labor monopolies," he [H. W. Prentis, president of the Armstrong Cork Company] said, "are proving even more dangerous to the public interest than the industrial monopolies of bygone days." He added that "big labor is even more dangerous to our freedom than big business, because big labor has votes." –*From the Philadelphia* Record.

On the Home Front

When Representative Sadowski (D, Mich.) suggested that the appropriation be doubled so the [Un-American Activities] committee would investigate the KKK, Rankin replied violently that he had never heard such a "nonsensical" remark.—*From the Chicago* Sun.

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of the New Republic. *Please enclose the original clipping.*—THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Back Up Words

SIR: When I was overseas and scared to death by Jerry bombing and shellfire, I never thought the time would come when I would confess to irresponsibility on the part of the United States. But that time has come, and I can no longer keep silent.

It is impossible for me to recall the hungry Italian children, or the coldness and misery that followed the wrecking of Cassino, Salerno and other villages, without feeling a deep sense of shame at the action the Administration is taking (or, rather, failing to take) in the food crisis. The crisis is *upon* us, it has been upon us from the moment we started the march up the peninsula of Italy and into France. It is discouraging to think that there are so many, as LaGuardia calls them, "belly Americans." To think that our first reaction to victory was to throw off practically all rationing so that we might "taste the fruits of triumph"! No wonder people in Europe turn to Russia. We are losing prestige we shall probably never recover. What we so loudly proclaimed to the world during the battle is now disclaimed by our inaction in the face of hunger all over the face of Europe and China.

Unless we do something, and quick, we may as well prepare to spend the next ten years trying to disprove the theory that we are a completely non-ethical nation. For when the child of Europe knows that we glut ourselves with "More butter, please, waiter," he despairs of America ever realizing that man, indeed, is not an island. We *must* act now and continue to act if we are to bring something decent out of the welter of darkness and human misery that exists over much of the world.

Jacksonville, Fla. LIEUT. E. M. FERGUSON, USNR

German Resistance

SIR: I was gratified to read the excellent review by Mr. Paul M. Sweezy of the recent books on Germany by Padover and Bach (the *New Republic*, April 22). It is most unfortunate that we have had so few thorough, intelligent and balanced reports on Germany. Too few observers with background and sound judgment know enough conversational German to reach valid sources of information among the people, and too few observers who know the language well have the power of analysis and an objective point of view. The *New Republic* would be performing a much needed service by presenting the side of the German story touched on in Mr. Sweezy's review. . . .

Those who, from the vantage points of New York or Washington, are convinced that there can be no good Germans alive today will, of course, say that those of us who claim to have found reliable people amid the ruins have been hoodwinked and have succumbed to German boot-licking. Such a charge is hard to refute. Perhaps in some instances it is true. If, however, there was no genuine resistance against the National Socialist regime, why did so many confessed Nazis tell me and others that if our occupation army were not there, civil war would break out?

T. C. DUNHAM

Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, O.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Dick Jay, of Fort Worth, Texas, sends us some correspondence he had with Senator W. Lee O'Daniel about price control. In answer to a letter from Mr. Jay supporting the OPA, the Senator sent a (mimeographed) letter suggesting that his correspondent read the Constitution of the United States carefully and he would see that there was no provision for price control in that "glorious document." Mr. Jay replied citing the general-welfare clause of the Constitution, referred the Senator to McCulloch v. Maryland, noted that the Supreme Court had upheld the constitutionality of price control and invited further correspondence. Up to the time Mr. Jay wrote us, the Senator had not replied.

Peter Siegle of Peoria, Illinois, tells us of the work that David Citron, "a small real-estate dealer," is doing there on behalf of liberal causes. During the strike of the Farm Equipment Machinery Workers (CIO), he turned his home over to the international representatives to save hotel expenses and pledged a weekly donation to the union as long as the strike lasted. He also helped organize a citizens' committee to aid strikers with food and money. "One of his dearest projects," Mr. Siegle writes, "is buying houses, renovating them and then bending every effort to help Negroes purchase them inexpensively."

Phil Heller, director of the International Solidarity Committee, 303 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, tells us that the committee has received lists of sick and hungry European anti-fascists who need help and urges that our readers adopt one of these people or send food packages through the committee.

Eduard C. Lindeman asks for contributions to the National Sharecroppers' Fund, 8 West Fortieth Street, which is organized to help raise the standard of living in the South. Some of the groups which the Fund will assist this year are the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, the Georgia Workers' Education Service, the Alabama Farmers' Union and the Delmo Homes Coöperative in southeast Missouri.

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News to Australia

For Eleanor and Eric Dark

by Karl Shapiro

I write you in the hour of peace and of May
From a land just north of the financial raj,
That capital of the world quite missed
By the angel of death on his recent rounds.
There above the fairgrounds of the earth
A toothless imbecile bomber paces
The slow peacemakers of the age;
There where the rational pursuit of gain
Once reared cathedrals to the tiny dime
The last bourse of the human race is meeting
In late extraordinary session.
From the land of plenty, in the season of love,
I send you greetings, aware and abashed
That I have caught my dream, am caught by time.

I write you from a writer's latitude,
Place of small farms, Republican hamlets,
Authors' estates and authors' shacks,
A logical location for a ruling class.
There is not a clock or ledger in the house
But the brook keeps time at the foot of the hill
In a seasonal way. The barn is a red
Subdued to the vale of green and gray,
Cedar and boulder, pasture and pine.
The road is narrow and incognito
Except to the mail, the grocer and friends.
Two hours from the crescendo of New York
We sleep to the proclamations of frogs.
—I do not wish to protest my love
But merely to state it as the status quo.

I do not wish you were here; I do not know
Whether the land of improvement has improved
On the other lands. Australia may be better,
The farther the better. Some look to Europe,
Even to the rubble for a suitable place.
Perhaps it is too late for expatriation
Or even for travel, unless on a mission
To number the starving or interview the damned;
For the suitable place is a thing of the past,
Chateau and villa and pension.
It is better to make a movie lot of a hut
Wherever we happen to be, better to squat
On whatever frontier or front we happen to be.

I have no news of the new dismay
That stirs a little in the king of birds
And beasts, and is not yet the gray
Dread, the terror by night, or the cold sweat.
We have no prophets but the comic strip;
The kids are nicely informed of the future
But scientists are backward and ill advised.
I do not know where our trial is in progress,
In Nürnberg, the Bronx, or in the skies.
The charges are ex post facto—what of that?
Who can plead innocent, hurl the first stone?
I read of a prison break, regret
The murderers are murdered. If the doors were prized
And the thugs got loose, would the banks atone?
I read with misgivings in the *Times*
That fifty monkeys have escaped their cage;
I imagine a plot against the human race,
Myself on trial for a series of crimes,
Zoo-keeping, monkeysuits and monkey glands;
May Day the Communists march in uniform
Ostensibly to show they are not Communists.
One of our Cardinals is putting forth verses
As an oak puts forth a pustule or fungus.
There is nothing new in religion among us.
I have no news of a Second Coming.

There is nothing new in politics except
The pax romana. I went to Washington,
The old-style capital, a not-unfriendly place,
And strolled among the fluted peristyles,
The architecture of an economic culture,
Marble stacked upon marble, thick with grace,
Tile floors, basilicas, Ghiberti's doors
Toned down for the approval of the common man,
L'uomo qualunque—we are led by one.
There is nothing new in the pax romana except
The Karnak of archives, the limestone banks.

I went to Boston, my wife by my side,
City of reading where the books are banned,
Pulped in the pillory, burned at the brain,
Desiccated city with fortunes to spend
On the past, but not a cent for today.
I wished them good morning, fled to the train.

I went to Manhattan, the crowning glory
Of the principle of steel. It is fine in the sun,
Spectacular from the air and from ships arriving.
It is tiresome to think of the skyscraper as
The ultimate obsoletism of a phase
Of housing, terribly tiresome to hear
That latter man would build it upsidedown.
One can only hope it will go on hiving
Millions of workers and drones and queens.

I went to Baltimore, to familiar scenes
Grown unfamiliar, the real become
The really unlikely. I have suffered the grave
Embarrassment of return, could not behave
As if I had returned. It was not home.
O terrible and familiar house of dreams
Where door and number can never be found,
Where the soldier picks and asks his way

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Over the known but not known ground
And, crushed, cries out, *Where is my house, my house?*

I write you from the peace of May, the place of love
And feel as if I write in nineteen thirty-nine.
The wall of hands it cost to hold the line
Gives way to the usual bulge. There is nothing new
In tactics, logistics, ordnance, flight,
Insignia, Bulgarian surgery, death,
Death by an arrow, death by a boomerang,
Death by a ray or a rain of plague,
There is nothing new in the enemy except
His diplomatic ability to provide
The symptom, the crisis, the knife and the news
That science has far to go—the patient died.

This is the way it stands with technical man
Who smiles and washes his hands of the whole affair,
Like the other Roman. This is the way
We divide the onus of indivisibility
Exploding *atomos*. We need a new word,
A "rumpelstiltskin" never to be said,
And whoever says it will surely drop dead.
I pray for this word to be born to subsume
The Word of Monseigneur X and Physicist Y
And Diplomat Z, while the sky is blue
And in man's vocabulary there is room.

I pray that Australia remain at the periphery
Of the Western Problem, learn to diminish pace,
Receive our events through bad communications,
Misunderstand us, learn of us less.
Where the signs of heaven and earth are reversed
And the seasons opposite to English literature,
Different from the mouthings of many poets,
The fauna the property of another era,
The natives with the longest memory of time;
May distance forbid the tourist, the salesman,
The screaming comedian, the book of the week,
The shine of accessories that rusts the man.
Remaining palpable and small of growth
With interior thought that fingers the unknown,
Befriend your insularity, be far,
Hug the antipodes, survive.

Books in Review

Journey into Life

THE "PASSAGE" from home in the title of Isaac Rosenfeld's novel[1] represents the transition of a 14-year-old boy from a child who accepts the unquestioning love of a (traditional Jewish) family, to a precocious adult who debates, uneasily, the value of Illusion in personal relations based on greed, tyranny and emptiness. For this reason the first section, seen through the eyes of Bernard the child, overflows with an amoral warmth and vitality: Grandfather's crusted beard is as awe-inspiring as his religious conversations with his *Chassidim* friends; Stepmother's scrubbed face gleams as piously as her kitchen. Vivid as a nineteenth-century novel, the writing here is as traditional as its subject. But in the second portion of the book, which carries an exhaustive analysis of motives to the point of tediousness (a tediousness often found in Kierkegaard and occasionally in Henry James), novelistic problems are attempted, and partially solved, of such formidable difficulty that I shall call this a "failure" only tentatively, in quotes.

Being profoundly a psychologist (in the old religious, and more recently the artistic, sense), the author bases his morality on an ideal of absolute personal honesty regarding one's relations with people. And while honesty nowadays must include the Freudian awareness of what we keep hidden, Mr. Rosenfeld knows that the ethical problem remains the same: haven't people always hidden from themselves whatever was least flattering or reassuring? This is an interpretation of the "Unconscious" well known to Dostoevsky and to Henry James, but sadly missing from the psychological novel since.

[1] Passage from Home, by Isaac Rosenfeld. New York: Dial Press. 280 pages. $2.50.

Where a Freudian would split his boy in two as one who thinks he loves his father but who "really" (unconsciously) hates him, Mr. Rosenfeld judges Bernard's behavior as an ethical whole and finds that his real condition is paralysis, the inability to feel a genuine emotion of any kind. This paralysis seems a natural result of family tyranny, in which the powerless child is able neither to hate the oppressor, on whom he depends, nor to love him. Another of Mr. Rosenfeld's achievements is to have described an extremely subtle form of oppression: the father, living to some degree vicariously through his son, discourages the latter's human successes even more effectively than his failures. For if failure meets only contempt, success arouses a forbidding envy. Thus is the cycle of vicarious living conceivably perpetuated—made worse in Bernard's case by the paradox of being an only child in a large group of adults. The ideal is family love, but the reality is solitude. And so strong is the ideal that spiritual freedom seems impossible to the child excluded from its realization. Shuttling between envy and rebellion, Bernard's new-found humanity expends itself in tracing the nature of his own subjection.

Unable to run away from home, as his hero Cousin Willy had once done, the boy arranges a complicated—and vicarious—rebellion of great dramatic interest. He "manipulates" Willy into having an affair with his Aunt Minna, a youngish woman of ambiguous position who had once been Bernard's foster-mother. Having quarreled with his father and been ostracized by the family, Minna occupies the center of a Jamesian mystery: who was in the wrong, the father or the foster-mother? The answer varies according to the shifts of loyalty, for the boy is using his alliance with Minna partly as a weapon against his father. We are not sure whether he is also creating, as he suspects, another set of parents more to his liking, or whether, as he

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also suspects, his primary motive is vicarious sexual experience—and if so, who is the object of greater desire, Minna or Willy?

Half-consciously inciting both Minna and his father to a renewal of their old quarrel, Bernard waits half-guiltily for an explosion to occur, and when it does—outrageously—he finds himself half-innocently living with Minna and Willy as their unwelcome guest. He lives, in fact, in a squalid Bohemian kitchen, shut out from the connubial davenport and sleeping on a cot infested with bedbugs. About these he is too proud, too guilty, too "insulted and injured" to complain. They are the price one pays, no doubt, for experience. Not until the quarrels of the loving pair (recorded with extraordinary penetration) reach a peak of degradation, and not until a subsidiary character—a "comedian" as tortuous as a Dostoevskian buffoon—begins to seem almost a graying caricature of Bernard—does the prodigal son find himself back on the path toward expiation. But this path leads finally to an understanding which illuminates the book and makes the author's purpose plain in having created this monstrous child. Had he been presented in the usual soft, half-pitying light as a victim of persecution and a perfect paragon of conscience, we should never feel the full ironic tragedy of the beautiful closing scenes.

Bernard comes to his father hoping to receive anger and absolution. Instead, through an emotional interplay which moves below the surface dialogue as subtly as a pair of dancers, their positions are reversed and it is the father who appears in need of absolution. But even more than absolution he needs authority. And so, ironically, by pausing "on the verge of an absolute commitment"—by withholding some confession about his past relations with Minna—the father loses his superiority and the son loses a father.

> I had been ready to follow [him] into the peril of intimacy where we speak clearly and know one another all too well. I had been prepared to reveal all that I had grasped about myself, to confess all my guilt, my inability to be honest and clear.

But now Bernard, burdened with a moral superiority he cannot accept, is fastened by new ties of falsehood to his father:

> Now, I thought, it was too late. I had put off declaring myself, only to have my father deprive me of my last opportunity. From now on I was bound to accept him without question—and if without fear, also without the knowledge that there lay some truth between us into which we both might enter. My only hope had been to confess that I did not love him, to admit I had never known what love was . . . and by that confession to create it. Now it was too late. Now there would only be life as it came and the excuses one made to himself for accepting it.

By questioning the motives of this particular father and son so closely, Mr. Rosenfeld has advanced from the Oedipal proposition, "All sons hate their fathers" (because of a prehistoric accident which somehow became a fixed and timeless attribute of man's heredity), to the concrete questions of love-and-hate which are pertinent both to ethics and to art. If the son had explored his father's character as fully as his own we should have had a more traditional novel, though probably not a better one. But as it is, the characters involved in the moral problem—unlike the vivid grandparents, moving independently in their own lives—are seen only in relation to the boy's emotional needs. Thus Minna, Willy, and to some extent the father, are convincingly motivated shadows who have an indistinct, dream-like quality not inappropriate to the action. But the motives, the reactions, the relationships themselves are described with a terrible and uniquely disturbing realism. If this is "failure," perhaps it is our definition of the novel which needs revision.

By presenting Bernard as though he were all of a piece, instead of two halves of a dialectic, Mr. Rosenfeld has turned the familiar Hamlet-character of modern fiction into a plotting Iago. But this is the first time in many years, I should think, that we have felt sympathy for the full, authentic human monster, rather than distaste for his touched-up, glossy portraits. It is as though the young Proust had rewritten his affair with Albertine, this time with the staler Platonisms of "psychology" removed and some moral insights added: that jealousy has more to do with power than with love, that guilt conceals a monstrous pride, while in true hatred may reside salvation—these and other truths which can be, but are usually not, derived from Freud. We might even ask a further moral question, which may or may not have relevance to art: What is the price paid by a novelist if he is to remain a sharp observer of all the Guermantes and Grandmothers of life, rather than an inward recorder of struggle with the fathers, lovers, Albertines and Minnas of his own experience? Can we ever draw the features of those we are most truly committed to in love and hate? At least until some future novelist works out a better technique for doing so, I think *Passage from Home* must stand as a backward advance—from the Proustian present toward our psychological past.

MARJORIE FARBER

Chaucer for Non-Chaucerians

Geoffrey Chaucer of England, by Marchette Chute. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 347 pages. $3.75.

THIS BOOK is neither a typical popular biography nor an addition to Chaucerian scholarship. Miss Chute has written instead an informal, witty survey of Chaucer for literate adults who do not happen to be Chaucerians. She is at her best in the chapters where she is not discussing the literature. The facts about Chaucer are pleasantly presented against a series of well painted fourteenth-century backdrops. No sober medievalist, she does not walk in Chaucer's England as on hallowed ground. With a nice eye for the ludicrous detail, she gaily debunks the cult of chivalry. ("St. George was one of the four patrons of the Order [of the Garter]; the other three, as solemnly listed by King Edward himself, were his royal ancestor Edward the Confessor, the blessed Virgin and the Holy Trinity. The Order could hardly have failed to flourish with such a list of patrons. . . .") She gives lively support to her contention that the fourteenth century was "a thrusting, excitable, anxious century, racked by wars and labor disputes and high taxes and dangerous new ideas." And her own decorations—initial letters which capture so well "the expression of affable imbecility" of fourteenth-century manuscripts—add a grace note of authenticity.

In discussing the poetry itself, Miss Chute is less successful. Some of her critical attitudes—the recurring thesis that

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Chaucer the medieval Christian, and Chaucer the worldly artist, were continually at war; the assertion that Criseyde's faithlessness is motivated only by astrology; the obvious distaste for the *fabliaux*—are open to serious question. Unable to assume that her intended readers know their Chaucer, she is obliged to interlard her critical comment with generous gobbets of synopsis; and it is not easy to make exciting reading out of the-story-thus-far.

The hope "that any reader who enjoys meeting Chaucer in this book will go on and extend the acquaintance" is modest enough. That Miss Chute will convert that hypothetical publisher's darling, the man-in-the-street, is doubtful. Her best chance will be to reach that considerable number of presumably educated readers who, having once worried through the Canterbury Prologue under the eye of a statistician of petrified datives, have since soothed their consciences for not reading England's first great poet and novelist with the illusion that he wrote in Old English. Having once "studied" Chaucer, some of them may now get around to reading him. WILLIAM W. WATT

An Englishman Approves

Midwest at Noon, by Graham Hutton. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 351 pages. $3.75.

THAT an Englishman should write the best book on the Midwest tells us much about both America and the region which Mr. Hutton here celebrates. Midwesterners have long suffered from an inferiority complex. The East took the inferiority for granted. It remained for an official of the British Information Service to spend five years among us and leave behind him an acute and sympathetic analysis which Midwest and East alike can read with profit.

Sectional differences, as Mr. Hutton knows, are growing less important in these days of national standardization. That is why his book is as much a study of America as of one region. But he has also caught and faithfully mirrored those special characteristics which are peculiar to or find their strongest expression in the great reaches between the Alleghenies and the Missouri, the Ohio and the Lakes.

One is continually surprised that he found so much to write about. The Midwest's social structure, its schools, agriculture, growing urbanism, newspapers, businessmen, young people, religions, merging nationality groups—even its weather—come under his thoughtful and appraising eye. If his book has one fault it may be an excess of kindness. Mr. Hutton liked this region and its people. Except with respect to the weather, he sometimes seems inclined to excuse or justify, with something of the fond defensiveness of the native.

It may astonish many Americans to realize that the eight Midwestern states (Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri) have almost the same population as the 11 Eastern states from Maine to the District of Columbia. Mr. Hutton correctly emphasizes the breath-taking speed with which the Midwest has been industrialized and urbanized. Of 14 cities of more than 500,000 population, seven are in the East and five in the Midwest. Moreover, the Midwest actually outranks the East in the number of cities with more than 250,000 population.

"DICKENS, DALI & OTHERS

is Orwell at his best. Which is saying a great deal. Few people have ever said better things about the culture of the masses. I would specify as little masterpieces the following essays: *Boys' Weeklies*, *The Art of Donald McGill*, and *Raffles and Miss Blandish*. I hope they stimulate American critics to analyze the comic-strips and the pulps. The brilliance of Mr. Orwell's pioneer effort should put them on their mettle."
—ERIC BENTLEY, *Saturday Review* $2.50

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Eric Bentley's

THE PLAYWRIGHT AS THINKER

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This growth of cities, with the accompanying development of industry and commerce, has taken place over so short a span that people now living stand forth as symbols of a revolutionary social change. President Truman's mother was alive at the time of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the border struggles over slavery. Within a few generations the prairies and plains were broken, agriculture built up to the point of producing vast exportable surpluses, heavy and light industry in profusion overlaid on the substructure of an agrarian economy. Today, as mechanization steadily reduces manpower needs on the farms, the cities increase their relative importance, and political and economic tensions arise from the urban-agricultural cleavage.

Industry and the city brought forward the businessman as the Midwest's folk hero. But his days of swashbuckling adventure, rugged enterprise and rapid creation of wealth were short. The Midwest's growing cities had not really settled into a stable social pattern when the great economic upheavals of our day broke over them, to find them largely unprepared. Successive depressions of growing violence linked the Midwest with the economic tides of the nation and the world. That, as Mr. Hutton says, "was a revolting and revolutionary thought to the typical Midwest businessman. . . . It meant that the insulated prosperity of the region, based on its resources, economic development and population by immigrants, has passed." It also meant expanding power of organized labor and social cleavages between the urban masses and the rural individualists.

The pace of urbanization is the key to what many have found the baffling political behavior of the Midwest. When farm unrest coincides with urban discontent, the Midwest goes radical. That was true in the late eighties and nineties, when Grangerism and Populism on the farms reinforced the "anarchists" and unionists of the city. It was true again in 1932. But in each case the passage of the farm crisis witnessed a return of the farmers to the side of conservative business. Formerly this was enough to swing the Midwest safely into conservative Republicanism. But today the cities are relatively more important and the balance more even. In 1940 Indiana, Iowa and Michigan turned anti-New Deal, along with the peripheral and least urbanized Midwest states of Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas; but Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Missouri voted Democratic. In 1944 the Republicans lost Michigan again but picked up Wisconsin and Ohio. The old stereotype of the agrarian, and therefore Republican, Midwest no longer holds good. Like the East and South, it has become the battleground of political conflict between liberalism and conservatism, with the lines drawn between city and country-small-town.

So Mr. Hutton reaches a series of negative conclusions about the Midwest:

> It is no longer the "cradle" of Republicanism. It is not mainly agricultural or rural. It is not pioneer-minded, imbued with a sense of the pioneers' equality, and with their radicalism. It is no more isolationist, foreigner-hating, or insular than other regions, and less than some. It is not under-educated, a region of "hicks," lacking a culture of its own. . . . It does not hold the South and the East together in a great American pyramid. It is not a region of little business against the big business of other regions; nor is it one of small towns and cities against the big cities of other sections. It is no longer so distinct in its differences from the East; indeed, it is fusing with the East. Its distinctive characteristics are not those of its cities or towns, its business, or its farming [but] those of its richly varied peoples, their neighborliness, their tolerance and conformity to one broad way of life.

In the course of discovering what the Midwest isn't, Mr. Hutton has given us a penetrating analysis of what it is. I think his book will stand for a long time as a brilliant study of America and Americans.

ROBERT LASCH

Notice to

New Republic Readers

In November, 1918, the *New Republic* was forced to raise its subscription price from $4 to $5 per year.

Now in the wake of a second war, another upward adjustment must be made if the magazine is to survive at today's levels of publishing costs.

Most weeklies of a literary or political nature have already raised their prices from $5 to $6 for an annual subscription; most popular magazines likewise are going up.

Effective July 1, 1946, the subscription price of the *New Republic* will be $6.00 for one year, $10.00 for two years and $14.00 for three years.

Current subscribers have the privilege of renewing their subscriptions, but for *one year only,* at the present rate of $5.00 which will be maintained on all orders mailed prior to July 1st. No premature renewals for terms in excess of one year will be accepted, but all subscribers may avail themselves of a one-year renewal regardless of expiry date at the $5.00 rate if we are notified before July 1, 1946.

Circulation Department

THE NEW REPUBLIC

40 East 49th Street New York 17

Dog Bites Dog

The Hucksters, by Frederic Wakeman. New York: Rinehart and Company. 307 pages. $2.50.

NOTHING succeeds like young Mr. Wakeman. A successful account executive (ALCOA, Westinghouse, American Can, Ford Motor) before the war, he went into the Navy, from which he emerged with *Shore Leave,* a critically and popularly successful first novel. Back for a stretch in radio advertising (Campbell's Soup, RKO and Lucky Strike) at "a presidential salary," he comes up with a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, *The Hucksters,* a satirical onslaught on the advertising agency, the radio and Hollywood. It is probably too much to hope that his next exercise will be an overhauling of the Book-of-the-Month Club, but the pattern of his career invites the hope.

Mr. Wakeman's special knowledge and unique experience, combined with a very real talent for catching the

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speech and the habits of his young fliers, almost lifted *Shore Leave* from the ruck of wartime writing. The same qualities are exhibited in *The Hucksters*, but once again the total effect of his novel is dissipated by the author's wallowing (the word is used advisedly) in what has passed since *A Farewell to Arms* for "romantic love." When Mr. Wakeman is taking the hide off the men who manufacture and sell Beautee ("Love that soap") Soap he is right up there with the early Sinclair Lewis and the Middle or Dark Brown-period John O'Hara. But when his advertising-agency hero meets LOVE (the capitals are Mr. Wakeman's)—"the only profound feeling of love he had ever known"—Mr. Wakeman's ability to write departs with his sense of humor. It isn't bad enough that Victor Norman falls in love with a woman: his passion has also to embrace her children, and we get passage after passage like this:

Sweet, gracious Kay. Mad, passionate Kay. Grave, serious manly Hal. Wild, unearthly little Ellen. The family.

This was the purpose for which the instincts of man had first desired time. This was the reason why the mind of man had invented time. The richest of all time is the time spent in love. No wonder he'd been so restless . . . all that squandered time. That sad loveless time.

. . . coming at you through the courtesy of Bullover ("Love that watch") Time. . . . Mr. Wakeman is just a copywriter at heart, which is a shame, for when he isn't selling something without price-tags like love or honor, or time, he's an accurate reporter of the way too many of us live now. Reaching for the moon, he forgets that nice green cheese lying all around him.

GEORGE MAYBERRY

A Reader's List

A Short History of the Far East, by Kenneth Scott Latourette (Macmillan, $6). Dr. Latourette has provided in 652 pages a well organized, comprehensive and always interesting history that tells the story of Far Eastern lands, including India and Southeast Asia, from the earliest recorded days to the defeat of Japan, in sanely objective fashion. As objective as he is, however, it must be noted that the author is essentially conservative in his inclinations, which, while it certainly does not weigh heavily upon his political judgment, makes it advisable to check up on him when he is contemplating such matters as the Chinese Communists and the influence of the USSR. Perhaps he is a little questionable, too, when he suggests that the "Young Marshal" was "pardoned" by Chiang Kai-shek after the Sian kidnaping, talks about "the dogged fighting" of the Kuomintang army in 1944 and is somewhat offhand in mentioning the execution of Chinese liberals by the ruling party; while any later edition should correct the bibliography on page 648 and give proper credit for that skillful defense of the KMT, *The China of Chiang Kai-shek*, to P. M. A. Linebarger, not "Lattimore."

Victorian Doctor, by T. G. Wilson (Fischer, $3.50). The era was Victorian, but not the doctor. Sir William Wilde, father of Oscar Wilde, was one of the eminent Dublin physicians of his day. Statistician, archeologist, literary figure, he was a man of boisterous vitality. Charles Lever, novelist, was his classmate and friend and "Speranza," poetess and Irish patriot, his wife. Those who gave Dublin its medical preëminence—Graves, Stokes, Colles, names still attached to diseases—were his teachers and colleagues. He had an illegitimate child, a son who also became a doctor, and there were rumors of others. At 49 he defended himself against an accusation of rape in a libel suit brought by a patient against his wife. The plaintiff was awarded

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damages of one farthing which, perhaps, estimated to a nicety the price of her virtue. Dr. Wilson has written an engaging biography with an affectionate regard for Victorian Dublin.

States of Grace, by Francis Steegmuller (Reynal and Hitchcock, $2.50). A delightful satirical story about the struggle for power between Father Philip, a straightforward, almost naïve young priest, and Mrs. Brennan, dowager empress of the little American colony in Bahari, Egypt. Mrs. Brennan is a formidable character, cold, ambitious and unpleasantly possessed of religious fervor. By pulling strings, she becomes Mother Superior of the Egypt chapter of the Sisters of Our Lady of Limerick, depicted by Mr. Steegmuller as a not too progressive organization. The other figures of the book are a sheer delight. There is Mrs. Brennan's weak little Freddy, married to Max Mitchell, the glamorous actress; the art dealer, Mr. Giannini, who has a peculiar insight into the morals of American archeologists; and Mme. Pichat, the epitome of French owners of *pensions de famille* all over the world. The net result is that uncommon thing—good American satire.

New Republic News

One of the most difficult jobs of an *NR* editor is saying, "There just aren't any openings" to the many excellent people who'd like to join the staff. This week the following came in.

"Application for Saturday Secretary."

"Miss A—— B—— (initials mine —*NRN*) wishes to apply for above job. She has had much experience and can answer phone legibly and take messages distintly. She is good, sweet, kind to animals, considerate, intelligent, witty, cynical (if the occasion demands), and has a magnetic personality. She will start work as soon as Art School closes, which is soon.

"She is a little feeble on spelling though."

Intrigued, we called the telephone number she enclosed "for future references," and it turned out that she is the daughter of an editor we know. We're glad to get acquainted with a liberal who's getting an early start, though, for we learned that she's thirteen years old.

• • •

Family congratulations to Malcolm Cowley, who was just awarded a grant of $1,000 by the American Academy and National Institute of Arts and Letters for distinguished work. Julian Huxley is in Mexico City on UNESCO business. Ralph Martin is trying to meet Harpers' October deadline for his new book, *The Boy from Nebraska—The Story of Ben Kuroki*, while getting the old jalopy ready for the nationwide trip he and his wife will make for the *NR* this summer. We're expecting more articles from H. N. Brailsford, who is still in New Delhi, India. George Soule is hard at work on a book he's writing about the economic history of the period following the First World War. Tom Sancton came to see us on his way from Cambridge, Mass., to Pascagoula, Miss. Lou Falstein has buried himself in a New Jersey hideout for some concentrated writing and Denis Plimmer dashed off for England a week or so ago, leaving behind assorted notes and bits of copy.

• • •

Editor Michael Straight stuck his head in the door after reading the first paragraph of this column to say, "Her father's a great guy, but tell them that his spelling is a little feeble too."

• • •

Karl Shapiro's *V-Letter and Other Poems* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1944 and he has since published another volume of verse, *Essay on Rime* (Reynal and Hitchcock). He is living in a Connecticut valley.

Marjorie Farber, formerly an assistant editor of the New York *Times Sunday Book Review*, now lives in California. She has contributed reviews and articles to *Accent*, *Partisan Review*, *Kenyon Review* and other periodicals.

William W. Watt has just been released from the Navy and is resuming his duties as associate professor of English at Lafayette College. He is the co-editor of an anthology, *Biography: Varieties and Parallels*, and co-author of *A Dictionary of English Literature*.

Robert Lasch, for 10 years on the staff of the Omaha *World-Herald*, is an editorial writer for the Chicago *Sun*. He is the author of *Breaking the Building Blockade*, published last month by the University of Chicago Press.

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A Journal of Opinion

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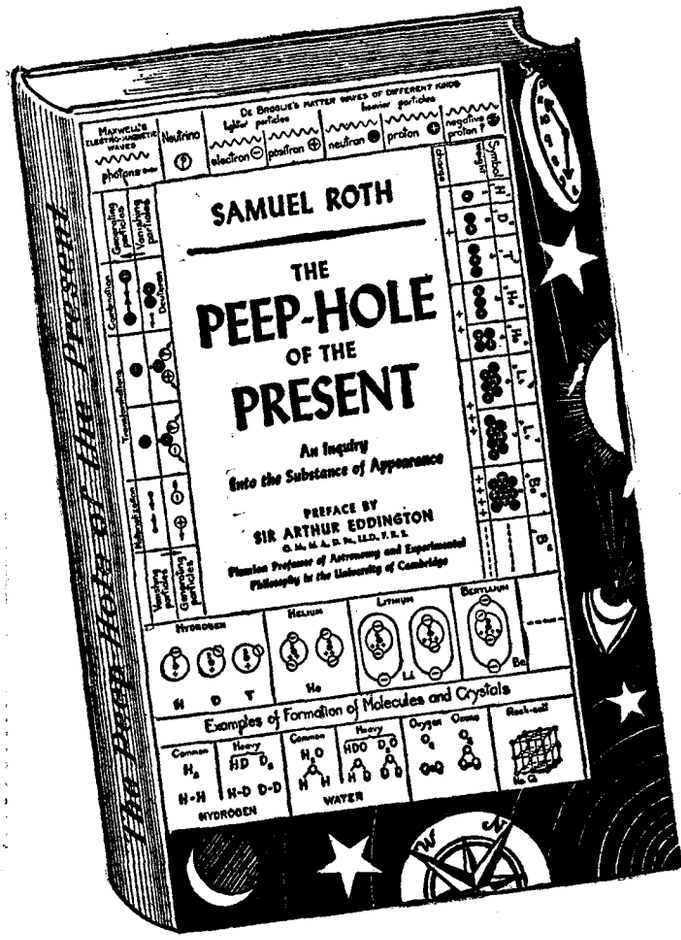

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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